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New Statesman

Robert McCrum: short story ● Peter Hain: Future of socialism ● Chad: US seeks surrogates

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New Statesman

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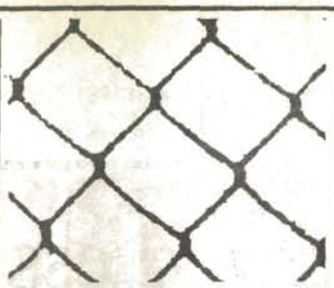

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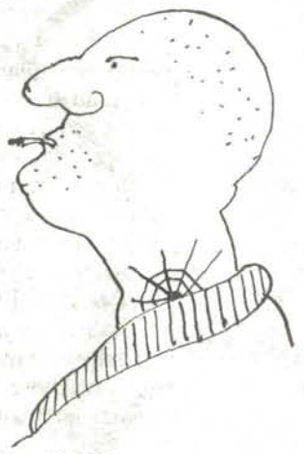

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New Statesman

Vol 106 No 2734 12 August 1983

Press on regardless

IN 1897 THE illustrator Frederick Remington was sent to Havana by the New York *Journal* to cover the Spanish-American war. He cabled back to his office: 'Everything is quiet. There is no trouble here. There will be no war. I wish to return. Remington.' William Randolph Hearst, the *Journal*'s owner, was never a man to let facts stand in the way of a good story. He cabled Remington at once: 'Please remain. You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war.' And he did.

War and its aftermath clearly bring out the worst in many newspapers. No doubt William Randolph Hearst would have admired the *Sun*'s tireless efforts to 'furnish the war' during the Falklands adventure last year; but even he might have been taken aback at the *Sun*'s ingenuity in simply inventing an interview with Sgt Ian McKay's widow, Marica McKay, when it found itself unable to obtain one by legitimate means. For this most serious journalistic offence – the invention of news – the Press Council has duly reprimanded the newspaper.

The resultant 'apology' published by the *Sun* lást Monday was something of a classic. For what it in fact apologised for was that it connected under the same headline its 'exclusive first-hand interview with the widow of Lieut Colonel H Jones' with the article masquerading as an interview with Mrs McKay. It is not this connecting job that it was condemned for.

The delivery of the necessary judgement on the *Sun* would never have happened had it been left to the Press Council or Mrs McKay – for the injured party may well be the person who least wants to stir up painful memories. The *Sun*'s lie about the interview was listed by the *Daily Mirror* on 22 October 1982 as one of three deliberate fabrications published by its rival. What happened next is described by Geoffrey Robertson in his book, *People Against the Press*. A third party, a woman who had no personal involvement in the case, then made a complaint to the Press Council. She was informed that she should 'bear in mind that complaints committee would be no better placed than yourself to assess the truth of two conflicting newpaper stories unless it is provided with independent evidence supporting one version'. This statement neatly disposes of any pretensions of the Press Council to a professional authority.

From then on, the council appears to have put every possible obstacle in the path of the complainant, saying at various points that it was not clear whether she was making a complaint or an inquiry, that it was not clear if she was complaining about the *Sun* or the *Mirror*, that it was up to her to find the evidence to support her complaint and – when the *Observer* stepped in directly and simply asked Mrs McKay whether or not the *Sun* had interviewed her – that this evidence was merely hearsay. It took the Press Council nine months to establish to its own satisfaction that Mrs McKay had not been interviewed by the *Sun*, that the *Sun* claimed it had interviewed her, and that this was a bad thing. Faced with such reluctance to respond quickly, it is hardly surprising that most complainants give up.

So far, all the calumny has been heaped on the *Sun*, and the Press Council appears in the most gallant light, protecting widows, punishing liars and upholding truth. Yet the story behind its eventual adjudication confirms that the Press Council is a fearful and amateurish creature, no more able to uphold standards than are the individuals who appeal to it for help. It lacks the staff, the finance, the expertise, the authority and, ultimately, the power to regulate the press. A private body of radical journalists and lawyers studying complaints and looking into apparent lies in newspapers would have just as much effect and its adjudications would be a great deal more interesting.

The National Union of Journalists was right to withdraw from the Press Council as an ineffectual body incapable of maintaining journalistic standards. It should have been more active in trying to promote a new press authority, properly funded and staffed, and with the power to enforce certain rules on the press.

One of these should be that newspapers should not tell lies. There is no law preventing papers telling lies about events, or about dead people (whose reputation cannot be defamed); the only law prohibiting papers from telling lies about living people is inherently elitist. For the function of the law of libel is to prevent people's reputations from being damaged, not to stop lies being told. Thus, the richer and more famous a person is, the more important is that person's reputation and the higher the damages she or he can claim. The reverse is true for 'ordinary' and poor people who cannot even claim legal aid to bring a libel action.

Moreover, the rich and powerful often use writs not to correct a genuine wrong but to stifle *any* press discussion of their activities.

ONE FLEET STREET paper recently spiked a series of articles on a leading businessman. It was not that the articles were inaccurate (they were, in fact, based on several years' diligent research), nor that they were not in the public interest; it was simply that the businessman in question is notoriously litigious, and the paper was not prepared to spend large amounts of time and money defending the inevitable libel case.

That is one reason why the press in Britain seldom troubles to inquire closely into the conduct of the people and institutions which govern us. It's so much safer and cheaper to regale readers with tales of how Sexy Schoolteacher Ran Off With Saucy Milkman; or, if it is a paper with delusions of 'seriousness', to print official hand-outs and non-attributable briefings as if they were independently-garnered 'news'.

This need not be so. It is a truism to say that the Watergate scandal could never have been revealed had it happened in Britain. In the US not only are the libel laws different, requiring those in public life to put up with a certain amount of flak as a matter of course, but there is also a Freedom of Information Act. This gives the edge to those papers which choose to interpret their job as scrutinising the actions of the powerful, as opposed to the lives of the powerless. □

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Just wee girls in a gang bang

ACCORDING to legend, the security officer appointed to conduct inquiries into major leaks from the Scottish Office begins his interrogation of suspects by telling them that he has been doing the job for twenty years and has never yet found a single mole. Now presumably launched upon another official leak inquiry, he has doubtless been busy this week trying to trace those responsible for one of the most revealing glimpses so far into the political machinations and paranoia of the police in Scotland.

Last Thursday *The Scotsman* revealed that publication of a major Scottish Office report on the police handling of sexual assault cases had been delayed for several months because of fierce police opposition. The newspaper quoted an internal Scottish Office minute to ministers which described how the police had attacked a draft of the report as biased and inaccurate and insisted that it should not be published. The minute, apparently written by a brave middle-ranking civil servant, criticised the police reaction as 'intemperate' and strongly defended the report, a draft of which was leaked to *The Scotsman*.

The 200-page report, written by researchers Gerry Chambers and Ann Millar from the Social Research Branch of the Scottish Home and Health Department, was completed last year and due to be published by this spring. The furious police reaction on seeing a draft sparked off an equally fierce battle within the Scottish Office. Some senior civil servants were prepared to submit to police demands for suppression, but they were countered by others, including the author of the leaked minute.

At the moment it appears that the pro-publication lobby has won, as ministers have decided to publish the report 'as soon as possible.' It is planned to appear well before Parliament reassembles in October in an attempt to avoid a parliamentary row. The deliberate leaking of the report and the minute mean that this ploy could now be unsuccessful. It is now also more difficult for the report to be doctored in order to placate the police. The Scottish Press Office said last week that there was 'no question of any change in the substance of the report.'

According to observers, the vehemence of the police's response, especially that of the Strathclyde force, was extraordinary. The police are said to feel that they have a natural right of veto over government research, and their claim that they did not realise the report would be published when they gave access to researchers in 1980 is widely regarded as untenable.

New guidelines on how the police in England and Wales should deal with rape cases were published last March following controversy over a television film of police insensitively interviewing a rape victim. Although Scottish law and procedures are completely different, the Scottish Office initially intended merely to copy the English and Welsh guidelines. But after an internal struggle, the Scottish Secretary George Younger decided to await the outcome of the research. However there is still widespread scepticism from observers like the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre about the likely value of any guidelines north of the border. It is thought that they will probably be in effect co-written by the police and civil servants and will thus have little impact on existing police methods.

These behind-the-scenes conflicts could cause awkward problems for the future of independent government research into the police in Scotland. Researchers in all fields have long been under pressure not to produce results that will embarrass the government of the day. But the bitterness generated by the rape research could make the police rethink their co-operation on future projects, and could even prompt a review of the role of the Social Research Branch which has produced findings before which were unpopular with the government and the police.

In spite of all the controversy, the report itself does not contain especially surprising findings. It shows that the police share many of the popular male misconceptions about rape. The researchers studied nearly 200 sexual assault cases in Edinburgh and Glasgow in 1980 and 1981 as recorded in police crime reports. They interviewed 70 women who reported being sexually assaulted and talked to 30 CID officers about the cases. The main conclusion is that:

> the single most likely outcome for a case of sexual assault which is reported to the police in Scotland is that it remains unsolved; the next most likely outcome is that it will be no-crimed by the police and the third that it will be marked 'no-proceedings' by the prosecutor.

'No-criming' is the process whereby cases initially reported as crimes are later redefined and excluded from crime statistics largely because the police refuse to believe the original complaint. This occurred in 22 per cent of the cases studied, a much higher proportion than that found in cases other than sexual assaults. The report accuses the police of forcing some women to withdraw their complaints and criticises them for 'ad hoc judgements concerning the validity of sexual assault complaints.'

Although some women were complimentary about the way their cases were handled, the report points out that over 80 per cent found one or more aspects of the investigation procedure stressful. Women are quoted as saying they were 'badgered like a criminal' and 'treated like dirt,' and as describing CID officers as 'bullying,' 'cheeky,' 'bossy,' and 'insensitive.' The report recommends that the police approach is changed so that the 'primary consideration' is the welfare of the woman. Only essential procedures, like a short statement and a medical examination, should be carried out when the woman is still in a state of shock, whereas lengthy and testing interrogations could wait until later.

Police training needs to be improved to enable them to question received prejudices about sexual violence. The report urges consideration to be given to the establishment of a specialised unit. It seems to reject the idea of women-only units as impractical, although measures to increase the involvement of women police officers are regarded as important.

The report quotes many examples of the prejudices espoused by police officers. One detective inspector is quoted as saying: 'about 1 in 20 complaints are "real rape" and all the rest are wee girls in a gang bang.' He said that in twenty years' experience he had spoken to 30 or 40 supposed rape victims of which just three had been genuine. One woman said she had been told by CID officers that '90 per cent of cases are not real rapes.'

One police report describes the case of a 'self-confessed whore':

> No injuries except a bump on the rear of her head. Try as we might we could not talk her out of it and she insisted on reporting it as rape, perhaps she had heard of criminal injuries.

Although rape victims in general thought that women police officers were more sympathetic than men, this was not always the case. Some police women themselves subscribe to the familiar myths. One woman detective sergeant is quoted in the report as saying that there are two false allegations to every genuine rape complaint.

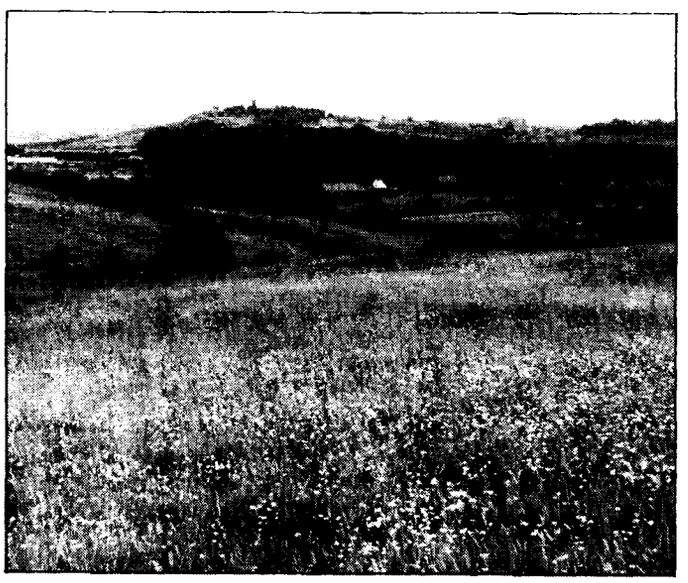
Rob Edwards

Dudley's private wealth . . .

APART FROM failing to generate economic growth, Enterprise Zones are having a disastrous effect on the environment. In May, developers bulldozed a working farm in Dudley Enterprise Zone in the West Midlands, destroying an unusual urban nature reserve.

Merry Hill farm is in the Blackbrook Valley, the site of a conservation project by the European Campaign for Urban Renaissance. Local opposition organised by the Urban Wildlife Group failed to stop the bulldozers, but the police have refused to prosecute the developers, local millionaire twins Don and Roy Richardson, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act – under which it is a criminal offence to destroy birds' eggs and

Merry Hill farm: before the Richardsons moved in . . .



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nests in the breeding season.

Indeed, the twins must be happy to know that the Enterprise Zone has been extended to take in the 105-acre site of the now closed Round Oak steelworks, which they bought as a speculative venture from British Steel Corporation late last year.

The rates and tax concessions of Enterprise Zone status will boost the value of the Round Oak site – adjacent to Merry Hill farm – but will do little to regenerate the stricken West Midlands economy. Although Dudley council claims to have created 450 jobs in the Enterprise Zone since its designation in July 1981, all the evidence suggests that Enterprise Zones only transfer jobs from one place to another within the locality.

THE RICHARDSONS, who made their money in the scrap metal business in nearby Oldbury, turned to property development in the late Seventies and have found in the Enterprise Zone their ideal opportunity. Not only have the Richardsons been given Enterprise Zone status for the Round Oak site (the council applied on their behalf to the Department of the Environment), but the council has also stepped in to take up a 25-year head lease on another of their sites in the Enterprise Zone that they are already developing (into 36 industrial units). This, say the minutes of the Policy and Resources committee for 20 July, was required to guarantee the rent for the purposes of obtaining institutional finance for Richardsons Developments Ltd.

In addition, the Richardsons can hope to benefit from the council's £30,000 promotional budget for the Zone. 'With the advent of Richardsons Developments Ltd,' say the minutes of the Finance Committee, 'a reassessment of the Dudley Enterprise Zone budget is called for.' An additional £63,000 was voted.

John Rentoul

. . . and public poverty

A TEACHERS' UNION leader has gone out of his way to protect from publicity the vice-chair of Dudley's education committee, who, by offering to lend textbooks to hard-up schools in the authority, admitted in a consultative meeting with local teachers that Dudley's spending on education was inadequate.

At the meeting, councillor Elizabeth Walker, who is head of a school in neighbouring Labour-controlled Sandwell, offered to lend 100 textbooks from her school to an impoverished Dudley school. The offer was reported in the *New Statesman* last June.

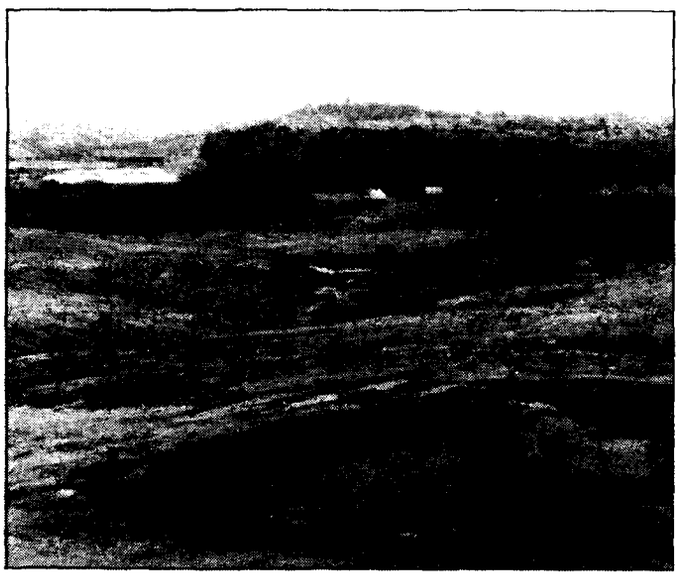
After complaints by councillor Walker about the *New Statesman* report, the general secretary of Dudley NUT Teachers' Association, Howard May, wrote to her explaining how attempts had been made to suppress details of the offer in union documents.

In a letter dated 21 June, Mr May wrote: 'The copy of our commentary on the HMI report which was reproduced in the *New Statesman* was not the official version and should not have been published. They obviously obtained a copy of our original draft which did contain reference to yourself and the Sandwell Authority. The particular paragraph was deleted before the document was produced in its final version. In order that you can see that this was done I enclose copies of both the original paragraph and the final document.'

Conservative controlled Dudley is one of the lowest spending education authorities in the country. It has been severely criticised in a major report by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI). Their report, published last October, concluded that Dudley education was 'at the edge of what can be done within present levels of funding'.

Rick Rogers

. . . and after



MISCELLANY

Moving target

Never let it be said that the Metropolitan Police don't learn from their mistakes. Older readers will recall the notoriety won by the Special Patrol Group (SPG) a year or two ago, especially after its adventures in Southall and Brixton. 'Ban the SPG' became a common rallying cry on the Left and in the civil liberties lobby. Pondering on this, some bright sparks at the Yard decided that the problem was (to use advertising jargon) that the SPG's 'corporate image' was a bit too powerful. The solution was simple: last year many of the SPG's tasks were handed over to newly-created Immediate Response Units (IRU). But the Yard knew that 'Ban the SPG' might simply be replaced by 'Ban the IRU', so it ordered that the Units must not keep the same name for more than a few months at a time. Consequently, the IRUs are no more; they have now been re-christened District Support Groups (DSG). In another few months' time the name will be altered again, before it can be too firmly lodged in the demonology of the Left. Clever, eh?

Some chicken

The latest edition of *FDA News*, journal of the Association of First Division Civil Servants, carried a report of a speech made to FDA members by our old chum Sir John Hoskyns, former policy adviser to Mrs Thatcher. 'Whitehall,' Sir John said, 'is like a headless chicken: it needs a central unit to draw up a long-term strategy.' Alas! This startling metaphor was heard by an audience of only 35 people. *FDA News* suggests four possible reasons for the poor turnout of mandarins at the meeting: 'it was only a few days after the general election; it was not well publicised; it was at an inconvenient time/place; members are just not interested'. This last reason seems to us to be highly defamatory of Sir John Hoskyns: how could *anyone*, least of all First Division civil servants, fail to be interested in Sir John's thoughts? *FDA News* should withdraw the slur forthwith.

Slow coach

In four weeks' time Sir Peter Parker will leave British Rail for ever, yet a replacement has *still* not been found. We therefore assumed that there would be scenes of frantic activity at the office of Korn Ferry, the headhunters hired by the government to seek out Sir Peter's successor. Not so. When we rang Korn Ferry on Tuesday this week to inquire about the BR appointment, we were told that Sir John Trelawney, headhunter-in-chief, was 'dealing with it personally on a confidential basis'. And where was Sir John? 'He's been on holiday for two and a half weeks but he gets back next Monday.' Was anyone else at Korn Ferry grappling with the problem in the meantime? 'No.'

Krypton factor

The Hackney branch of the SDP has been bombarding a certain Clark Kent with pleas that he renew his membership of the party. (Mr Kent, a burly fellow who frequents telephone kiosks, has failed to pay his subscriptions for this year despite numerous reminders.) Last week's post brought an invitation to an SDP jumble sale, a personal letter from the SDP's local parliamentary candidate and a cyclostyled appeal from David Owen and Shirley Williams. Oddly enough, the SDP hasn't noticed that, according to the electoral register, Mr Kent's address is also the home of Sir Maurice Oldfield (decd.) and a journalist of low repute who writes for the *New Stateman*. What makes it especially odd is that this fact was reported in the *Guardian* some weeks ago. Can it really be the case that there are some SDP apparatchiks who don't read the *Guardian*?

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Army sets up new dirty tricks

DETAILS OF A new undercover British Army unit which operated behind Argentine lines in the Falklands war have inadvertently been revealed by the Ministry of Defence. In order to avoid being shot as spies if captured, officers in the group were given cover posts in the Parachute Regiment, just days before clandestine operations began. The cover postings were carefully backdated to 1 April 1982, the day before conflict with Argentina began.

A week after the men were given their disguised identities, on 11 May 1982, undercover espionage missions began on the Argentine mainland. Although there were many leaked British claims of successful sabotage raids to destroy the feared Super Etendard aircraft while they were still on the ground, the more likely explanation of their activities was covert surveillance. Dug into hides near important airbases, such as Rio Gallegos, they could have provided the fleet with early warning of aircraft attacks.

The Ministry of Defence does not dispute that the officers were 'not what you would call orthodox army officers'. Nor do they appear to dispute that the postings may have been cover to ensure members would be treated as ordinary prisoners of war. Most of the 14 postings, they said, were connected with the Falklands war in order to 'do some administrative tidying up of people who weren't in units so they were attached to units to give them an identity – in case we had to report casualties, or something like that'.

In replying to questions, the Ministry spokesman let slip that the clandestine group was made up of 'individuals who may be connected with the Special Air Service'. In fact many of its members are known at the headquarters of the 22nd SAS Regiment in Hereford. But it cannot simply be a part of the SAS itself. The SAS were commanded throughout the Falkland campaign by Lieutenant Colonel H. M. Rose, and names of his squadron commanders were later published when they won decorations. None is among the new group of 14. In any case, officers in the SAS do not need such 'cover'.

The new group includes its own officer of regimental commander rank, Lieutenant Colonel M. Tudor. Switchboard operators at the SAS's Hereford base said they 'knew' Colonel Tudor and others in the list. The Ministry of Defence confirmed this week that there was indeed only one Lieutenant Colonel working in the normal 22nd SAS Regiment.

The names of the 14 men were revealed in the *London Gazette* – a government daily bulletin which lists all transfers and promotions in the armed forces. The *Gazette* reported the sudden transfers to the Parachute Regiment from a mysterious category called 'General List'. This list of about 40 officers appears to consist almost exclusively of members of the SAS and SIS-linked group, and a separate group all of whom are Chinese or Malay. At the top of the list was Lieutenant Colonel Tudor. Like others in the group, Colonel Tudor has been commissioned from the ranks of the 22nd SAS.

One of the Majors in the list, Brian Baty, is among the best known former SAS officers in Britain. Eight members of his squadron, based at Bessbrook in South Armagh, were convicted in Eire in 1976 for an illegal armed border crossing patrol. Major Baty appeared in the Dublin Special Criminal Court to testify that the men had made 'map-reading errors' using inadequate maps. He had previously worked for Highlanders commander Colin 'Mad Mitch' Mitchell as a special interrogator in Aden. One of the soldiers convicted in Eire, SAS Staff Sergeant Malcolm Rees, was also in the new group, promoted to Captain.

The new unit may be attached to the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), which normally offers employment to retiring officers of the SAS. A number of ex-SAS officers are now serving abroad with SIS, posing as British diplomats. It could thus form a clandestine overseas unit to take on missions denied to orthodox army officers. If the government has indeed set up a new military dirty tricks unit in parallel with the SAS, there will be considerable concern about who, ultimately, would be accountable to Parliament for the activities of such a force.

Duncan Campbell

Devon's roads to ruin

DEVON COUNTY Council's plan to be the first authority in Britain to hand over road maintenance to private contractors is being strongly opposed by its workforce. NALGO members in the Engineering Department are refusing to co-operate with the proposed two-year experiment, and will be backed by their National Emergency Committee.

Plans for the 'experiment' were announced in an extraordinary press release issued in the middle of the last council meeting before the summer recess. Many councillors knew nothing about it until they read their newspapers the next day. The scheme is the brainchild of Cllr Arnold Sayers, leader of the Tory-controlled council and the chairman of the Association of County Councils' Planning and Transportation Committee. Sayers believes privatisation will save money in a county with more miles of road than any other authority.

Ottery and Tiverton have been selected out of Devon's ten engineering divisions to take part in the experiment. Ironically, the Direct Labour Organisations (council employees) of these two divisions have been particularly successful in winning tenders; according to NALGO spokesman Ray Jackson, they have become an embarrassment to the Tory councillors. Ottery Division won three out of five major tenders for 1982/83 and for this financial year have won all three major contracts.

Cllr Sayers says he has already had preliminary discussions with 'a contractor'. It is, in fact, Tarmac, target of criticism in the Midlands for its involvement in constructing the launcher shelters at Greenham Common. Tarmac has no history of working for Devon council, but last April the company bought a well-known Exeter company, Kings Asphalt. They sold off the bitumen and surface dressing side to Colas, a subsidiary of Shell, but kept two Devon quarries. At the time, other contractors were mystified by Tarmac's sudden interest in Devon. Tarmac claimed they have a continual need to find new quarries.

All the unions involved feel betrayed by the Council's decision both because of the lack of consultation and because they had co-operated in earlier efficiency drives in order to protect themselves from privatisation. The ending of Fair Wages Agreements on 30 September means companies working on council contracts can now pay their employees considerably less than the council rate.

It is the Divisional Surveyors who have the power to scupper the experiment. They control the Highway Inventories which list every signpost on, measurement of and drain under every road. Without this information, a contractor's maintenance work could do more damage than it repairs.

Mark Cannan

Easy rules for asbestos strippers

GOVERNMENT proposals to regulate the booming asbestos stripping industry have been criticised by its own Health & Safety Executive. The Chief Inspector of Factories, who would be responsible for administering the new regulations, opposes plans to licence asbestos removers. These licences, Factories Inspector Jim Hammer believes, would help legitimise the companies which flout safety standards.

Asbestos stripping has now become one of the few growth areas in the building industry. It has been estimated that local education authorities may have to spend £500 million on removing asbestos from schools. Hospitals, council housing and other buildings contain thousands of tons of dangerous asbestos which is now being removed. With the demand for asbestos stripping, some unscrupulous companies are creating a new public health hazard. The Fulham power station row emphasised the problems: the contractor who was originally hired, UK Asbestos Plant & Machinery, is headed by a man who seven months ago was fined £2,200 for breaking safety regulations.

The government is now completing regulations which will licence asbestos strippers. Under the new proposals, any company paying the £100 fee will be eligible for a licence. The scheme is due to be considered by the Health & Safety Commission on 24 August.

Jim Hammer, the Factories Inspector, expressed his objections in a letter to the General and Municipal Workers' Union earlier this year. His office would have to issue licences to outfits for work that had not yet been tendered for, employing people who had not yet been hired and using equipment that had not yet been purchased, he said.

The Chief Inspector of Factories would retain the power to revoke a licence if a company endangered the safety of its workers or the local population. But a Health & Safety Executive spokesman admitted that even a prosecution for breaching safety laws 'would not necessarily be grounds for revoking a licence.' Privately, officials admit that the Health & Safety Executive simply lacks the necessary manpower to police the growing asbestos stripping industry.

Even the Asbestos Removal Contractors' Association (ARCA) has criticised the government's licencing scheme for being too weak. Such a stand is unusual in industry, where most trade associations prefer 'self-regulation' to government control. ARCA represents 80 member companies – only a quarter of the asbestos strippers – and its spokesman John Simpson admits that there are 'a few cowboy firms outside the organisation which breach safety regulations.'

ARCA is now turning down half the membership applications it receives because the companies do not meet its strict safety standards. The government is therefore about to introduce a licencing system which, however well intentioned, might actually weaken safety standards in this hazardous work.

Martin Bailey

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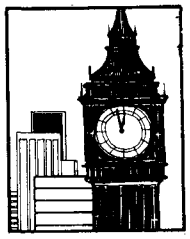

BERNARD CRICK, Guest Columnist

Urgent need for a strategy of time-scales

LAST WEEK I stated bluntly that we could be witnessing the end of the Labour Party, at least as a party of government, as distinct from a minority sect. Several maladies were diagnosed, not one; so the cure, too, must be complex. But all the symptoms appear crudely and clearly in the vote: not just that the Tories got in with a minority vote, but that the Alliance nearly caught us up. Their vote is highly volatile, but they have real grounds for hope. Our judgement must not be clouded by dislike of the SDP leaders. Contempt breeds irrational responses. We need to consider coolly and with empathy the motives of their voters, or we are lost.

'No compromise' on the programme, like 'No Surrender', will spell disaster. If we are serious in our socialism we need to think realistically and tactically, above all else to develop a theory and a sense of time-scales: what policies are possible in the short run to re-establish public confidence and regain power; what policies in the middle-term, given power, can prepare the ground for more basic social changes; and what time-scales are involved in bringing about long-term changes of structure and attitude. From all that history and sociology can teach us, we must realise that this is at least a matter of a whole generation, not of one Parliament or 'the first hundred days'. If we are serious . . . we need a socialist realism.

Within the party, I am sure that the priority is not organisational but theoretical: in other words, to build up just such a theory (and understanding) of stages. Organisation is important, and bad organisation is especially demoralising to those who have to work it; but no organisation can make up for the lack of a clear, coherent and realistic public image. Idealism and realism can be combined if we think in stages and always make this clear – whether in paperbacks, pamphlets, speeches or programmes. There need be no contradiction between tactics and strategy so long as party members are convinced that the leadership has long-term goals and a strategy to achieve them. The new SDP voters can be won back if approached respectfully, not recriminatingly (they are people, they have a vote), in terms of immediate problems put concretely and of long-term aims put speculatively, not dogmatically. There is no inevitability about gradualism, but it is the only way forward in a democratic franchise – all else is street theatre or sectarian pipe-dream.

Short-term politics deal with people as they are, the economy as it is and elections to be won. 'Selling-out' is doing things, out of a variety of options, that make middle-term progress impossible; pragmatism is simply drifting before the winds of change; proper compromise is a refusal to say everything at once. *Middle-term* politics get people used to new ideas and new patterns of work and behaviour and, through consent and persuasion, to working within some new institutional and fiscal structures. Through new structures, behavioural change can get under way, ideas can become popular attitudes. *Long-term* factors are when changes of attitudes and institutions come together to create fundamental qualitative and structural changes: cooperation, not competitiveness; egalitarian, not hierarchical structures.

THE SHORT-TERM programme must be defensive of and expansive of values that we know people hold already – abstractly, appeals to fairness and justice rather than fraternity and equality; and, more concretely, the virtues of work and job creation must resound louder than pity, and dole for the unemployed. At the moment, we appear in the eyes of SDP voters as a party of the declining industries and of state employment, of a merely defensive job protectionism. Defence of the popular Health Service, for instance, must come before its reform, and be separated from the campaigns of the health service unions for job preservation. Most of the public, quite understandably, thinks more of the service than the jobs. Of course, in fact, they are inseparable, but if the unions do the main campaigning, public cynicism is inevitable. We need miners to produce power; but I cannot accept as a matter of socialist faith that no mine can be worked out, or that socialism is working on non-economic products and freezing for ever the distribution of industry and housing left by early capitalism.

Far less complex should be the defence of local government – of whatever complexion. Here, the SDP followers feel deeply, but their leaders are rhetorical and vague – for people like David Owen and Bill Rodgers are centralists to the bone in a very old-fashioned Labour Party way. I've heard Labour Party officers defending the autonomy of local government, so long as it doesn't involve any variation in national standards of equity! Thatcher's Ministers are in favour of local government, so long as it is all the same and centrally controlled – however many voters may think differently. And we have to offer the Scottish Labour MPs what they now want: the historical case for devolution in Scotland is quite different from that in Wales. Also, the only section of the skilled working class to give Labour a majority were council tenants; but they are now a minority. Public housing needs democratising and the party needs to get over its somewhat hypocritical inhibition about helping home owners, especially first-time buyers.

Socialism must restate its basic ground as a theory of production, as well as distribution, and do so in immediate concrete terms. We need ideas about how to make the system work better now, as well as ideas on long-term change. And, as Meghnad Desai recently argued to a Fabian 'think-in', 'we may also need to go back to earlier experiments of setting up self-help organisations from within the community without the aid of political apparatus either national or local'. We must insist, indeed, that late capitalism wastes resources and that wages are not fairly determined by market mechanism; but that we nonetheless believe in a mixed economy and can be precise about the criteria for the mixture, and more opportunistic about helping anything that works to work better. To be milked in the future, the cow must now be fed. Some nationalisation was premature and, in itself, is not a policy for production.

Withdrawal from Europe, like unilateral disarmament, ceases to be a politically effective threat when it is a public pledge. Leadership must have flexibility: unilateralism must be used as part of a wider politics of disarmament (otherwise it is a self-indulgent Pyrrhic victory – the pressure-groups' victory being to pledge a party not even in power). Similarly, withdrawal from the EEC is sensible, but only if reform proves impossible. If Labour is only the sum total of pressure groups, however worthy, it will both remain a minority and be theoretically incoherent.

In a party system, the parties affect each others' behaviour. Some constituency Labour parties act like football teams who plan their tactics for promotion without studying either their opponents or what leads to increase and decrease of supporters. In some ways, it was the unexpected capture of the Tory Party by a hard ideology which tempted the Labour Party into an ideological binge irrespective of time-scales in theory, or public opinion in practice. But, when the public gets sick of the consequence of such politics, who will inherit? In one respect, the Tories beat us at our old best game: they developed a genuinely popular version of the abstruse laissez-faire ideology. We need to come out of our holes and revive a long-term 'public philosophy' or realistic rhetoric. □

Peter Kellner is on holiday.

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Why do prisoners riot?

Prison riots are not caused by overcrowding, but are the reaction to a repressive, secretive and arbitrary prison system. John Rentoul reports

PRISONS APPEAR to be on the edge of breakdown again. The riot in Albany prison on the Isle of Wight on 20 May was the most serious outburst of prisoner discontent since the notorious riot in Wormwood Scrubs in 1979. Then MUFTI squads (Minimum Use of Force Tactical Intervention squads) were used for the first time – the Home Office's 'solution' to a series of big riots, including Hull in 1976 and Gartree in 1978.

The Albany riot began with a dispute in a prison workshop. Fourteen prisoners had their wages docked – at the best of times, the work is meaningless and the wages paltry – and the punishment sparked a riot and a six-day rooftop demonstration. Afterwards over 100 prisoners were transferred to other prisons and 31 were charged with disciplinary offences.

Fifty long-term prisoners were transferred at short notice from Blundeston prison in Norfolk to Highpoint in Suffolk at the end of May. They were told that they were being moved to make room for prisoners transferred out of Albany and would be sent to a semi-open prison with single cells, a new gym and new facilities.

Arrival at Highpoint – a closed prison – was a rude shock; they were put four to a cell and deprived of their accustomed privileges. Two weeks later, on 6 June, Blundeston inmates at Highpoint went on the rampage, smashing windows and ripping out sinks and radiators. At dawn the next morning MUFTI squads moved in and weeded out those believed to be responsible for the riot, and they were transferred individually or in pairs to other prisons.

Ten days later there was an outbreak of fighting between prisoners and prison officers in Wormwood Scrubs D wing – the wing containing long-term prisoners – in which Jimmy Anderson claims to have been brutally assaulted (see *NS* 8, 22 and 29 July). The fighting occurred after an organised demonstration in which prisioners took over the top landing in D wing and held five prison officers hostage, to protest at the treatment of fellow prisoners after the Albany riot, according to Anderson.

On the same day (16 June) there was also a brief rooftop demonstraton at Camp Hill prison, on the Isle of Wight.

On Tuesday last week there was fighting in B wing of Wormwood Scrubs, in which remand prisoners are held, the only incident not involving long-term prisoners. The Home Office claims it was a racial fight between black and white prisoners, in which prison officers intervened. Yet seven officers were hurt, and one taken to hospital, while 11 inmates were treated for 'minor scratches and bruises'.

IT IS COMMONLY assumed that the increasing frequency of prison protests is due to increasingly gross overcrowding in prison cells, made intolerable by the hot weather. This assumption is very convenient for the Home Office for it conceals their absolute refusal – or inability – to reform sentencing policy or the prison regime. There *is* serious overcrowding of short-term and remand prisoners. But it is not they who protest. It is the long-term prisoners who riot as the only way to bring attention to their deep-seated grievances.

The total prison population in England and Wales at the end of June this year was 43,300 – 700 fewer than June last year. In total, there were places for 38,800 men and women, 4,500 fewer than the number of prisoners. But it is only certain kinds of prison – and certain kinds of prisoners – that are overcrowded. Some local prisons have almost twice as many inmates as their 'certified normal accommodation'; Leeds has 1,193 inmates and 621 places, and Birmingham has 1,080 inmates and 550 places. Altogether local prisons had a total population of 15,800 at the end of June, crammed into 10,900 places.

A third of those in local prisons are either awaiting trial, awaiting sentence or are short-term under-21s. And the 14 remand centres in England and Wales, whose population consists mostly but not exclusively of prisoners awaiting either trial or sentence, have a total population of 3,100 as against a capacity of 2,400. As they are all anxious to behave well, the Home Office forces them to live in the worst conditions, freeing the space for the more militant and political long-term prisoners.

If you leave local prisons and remand centres out of the picture, there were 25,500 places in prisons at the end of June for 24,400 prisoners. In other words there was 4½ per cent spare capacity. All the famous 'riot' prisons are maximum security long-term institutions, and all except Parkhurst are not overcrowded (see first table below).

THE REAL CAUSES of prison disturbances are long sentences served under repressive regimes which deny prisoners' basic human rights. The fullest recent expression of prisoners' grievances is the list eventually smuggled out of Albany, after the prison authorities apparently reneged on their undertaking to pass them on to the press. They can be summarised thus:

- The disparity in conditions between Northern Ireland and mainland UK, particularly remission (in Ulster all prisoners get their sentences reduced by half for good behaviour, and have done since 1976, when Roy Mason conceded it in lieu of political prisoner status; in England and Wales only one-third of the sentence can be remitted).
- The lack of means to ventilate complaints immediately, and the secretive and arbitrary nature of prison institutions and prison 'justice', particularly the failure to inform prisoners of the reasons for refusal of parole.
- The use of drugs as a means of control, and the lack of access or appeal to independent doctors (the prison medical service is not part of the NHS, and is answerable only to the prison authorities).
- The work is boring and poorly paid, recreation is boring, and the food is poor and inadequate.

Population and capacity of dispersal prisons

(those containing top-security category A prisoners)

Prison	Certified normal accommodation	Total population 30 June 1983
Gartree, Leicestershire	276	217
Frankland, Co. Durham	439	214
Hull	318	293
Wakefield *(incl. hospital places)*	757	705
Albany, Isle of Wight*	144	141
Parkhurst, Isle of Wight *(incl. hospital places)*	270	275
Long Lartin	420	393
Wormwood Scrubs D wing*	282	270

**disturbances this year.*

Length of sentence

Male prison population on 30 June 1981 (excluding remand prisoners, Borstals and detention centres)

	Up to 18 months	From 18 months to 4 years	Over 4 years	Life*
Violence against the person	1,559	1,403	907	1,479
Rape	20	227	288	65
Other sexual offences	209	364	251	17
Burglary	3,457	3,142	686	4
Robbery	197	1,016	863	12
Other	7,602	3,100	817	49
TOTAL 27,734 **Sub totals**	13,044	9,252	3,812	1,626

**Including detention at Her Majesty's Pleasure for under-18 year-olds*

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Long-term prisoners recognise that theirs are political grievances against 'the system', rather than local problems with prison officers. Many prison officers are genuinely sadistic, but the fundamental problem is that prisoners have no redress against them. Ironically, the system isolates prisoners, depriving them of their right to communicate: with their families, friends, communities, as well as with the prison authorities. Yet they are often in prison because of their isolation from social values. Violent protest is often the only recourse for them, who feel that they have no hope of elementary justice in the things that are vitally important to them: their health (mental and physical), visits, and parole applications.

The systematic denial of natural justice in prisons continues because of the Home Office's insistence that all decisions, including parole refusals, are 'administrative' and cannot be challenged or tested in a court of law. Furthermore, most of them are covered by the Official Secrets Act.

Part of the reason for the recent disturbances has been the increased politicisation of prisoners, which is in turn partly the result of keeping IRA prisoners in mainland UK prisons. Here the Albany riot shows the explosive effect of keeping IRA prisoners, who do not accept the legitimacy of the prison system, in the same place as 'ordinary' long-term prisoners, who tend to accept prison as the occupational hazard of the professional criminal, or as the inevitable punishment for their wrong-doing.

But the fact that four of the ten inmates involved in the rooftop demonstration were IRA men probably deflected attention from the real grievances of long-term prisoners. The Prison Officers' Association contributed to this: chairman Colin Steel insists that Albany was 'a concerted act of indiscipline organised and instigated by the IRA'. Nobody else believes that prisoners are an easy group to organise behind political aims.

One of the more frightening aspects of closed institutions run under the Official Secrets Act and not accountable to the outside world is the scandalous neglect of fire precautions in prisons. Chelmsford, a medium-security prison, was gutted by fire in 1978 (above). Since then the Prison Inspectorate has reported on over 20 prisons, almost all of which contained serious criticisms on fire safety. Several reports referred to the failure of prison governors to put into effect the recommendations of earlier inspections. Small wonder that the August 1983 issue of Prison Service News *should hail the replacement of prison cell mattresses by a new flame-retardant type at the cost of over £1 million as a 'breakthrough!'*

SUCH COMMENTS from the prison officers' representative illustrate the intractability of the problem. Those who have most power over prisoners – the judiciary, prison officers and prison doctors – have least interest in advocating radical reform of the system. Not only do they not want to undermine their own professional status, but they are drawn from the social classes which believe most strongly that social and moral chaos among the lower orders threatens to engulf society.

These obstacles to reform demand long-term solutions. In the short term, the situation could be ameliorated by sentencing fewer petty criminals – especially the black ones who are more likely to get a prison sentence – to jail, and sentencing 'serious' criminals to shorter terms in jail.

In Britain there are proportionately four times as many people in prison as in the Netherlands, twice as many as in Belgium, 60 per cent more than in Italy and 25 per cent more than in France (although there are about the same as in Germany and about half as many as in the US). In terms of convicted prisoners (ie, excluding remand prisoners) the situation is far worse. In Britain 8 out of every 10,000 of the population are convicted prisoners serving custodial sentences. In Holland it is 1.3, in Italy 2.2, in France 3.9 and in West Germany 6.7.

What is most surprising is that in the Netherlands more people get sent to prison than in Britain, but in Britain they get sent to prison for sentences which are on average five times longer. According to Professor Terence Morris of the London School of Economics, the judiciary has been overcome in the past 15 years by the 'myth of dangerousness' after the time of the Great Train Robbery and the Kray twins trials. He suggests this has resulted in a doubling of the perceived 'heavy' sentence from 5 to 7 years in the early Sixties to about 12 years now. In 1981 184 men were imprisoned for over 10 years; in 1963 only 65 men got such heavy sentences.

Sentence lengths are still under upward pressure from groups whose only law and order policy is to put more people in prison for longer, such as the Police Federation and the Conservative Party. These groups have effective leverage on the climate of opinion within which judges and the Home Office work: after the hanging debate in the House of Commons, *The Times* declared: 'For a strictly defined class of convict, rehabilitation is now a loose idea of the 1960s: the hour is for retribution.'

This call will be taken up at the Conservative Party conference in October, where there is likely to be strong lobbying for automatic 20-year sentences for murder. The Home Secretary's response to this pressure will be to repeat the government's commitment to the building of more prisons, a policy which continues to be justified by the

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newsworthiness of overcrowding. It will overlook an area of broad agreement over the measures which need to be taken to reduce the short-term prison population. There are several kinds of offender who even the prison officers agree ought never to be in prison. There are 20,000 people imprisoned annually for defaulting on fines, rates or maintenance payments (although at any one time they make up only 3 per cent of the prison population).

Colin Steel, the prison officers' chairman, believes alcoholics, drug users and other social inadequates must be taken out of prisons and even points out that 'if you relieve drug users of their dependency they would cease to be criminals'. He also agrees that prison is not the place to put mentally disturbed people, where 'we can only look after them in a containment situation'.

But even if these groups are removed from the prison population, that population would still be larger than in any other West European country except Germany. There are four main proposals for reform.

First, the cosmetic changes offered by the Home Office and withdrawn by William Whitelaw after his roasting at the 1981 Conservative Party conference. This involved automatic parole for short sentences.

Secondly, a parole system based on natural justice and appealable in courts of law, plus lower maximums for sentences, which is broadly the approach of the Howard League for Penal Reform and of this year's Labour Party manifesto. The Howard League believes that short- and medium-term prisoners should get automatic parole, and that there should be a right of appeal to the Appeal Court against Parole Board decisions.

Thirdly, prisoners themselves see half remission as the first step towards tackling long sentences, and the presence of Irish 'political' prisoners in mainland UK prisons has spread awareness of the disparity with Northern Ireland. David Jenkins, director of the Howard League, rejects this 'obvious' option because remission is in the power of prison authorities, unlike parole. But Professor Morris supports it. 'Certain types of offender – bent policemen, pornographers, professional fraudsters – are more likely to get parole,' he says. Remission is a right, whereas parole is a privilege. Although he insists that punishment by loss of remission should be administered by natural justice.

Finally, there are the abolitionists, such as Radical Alternatives to Prison (RAP), who do not believe that imprisonment is a 'rational, humane or effective way of dealing with harmful behaviour of human conflict.' RAP sees imprisonment as necessary in an 'unequal society', so that abolition will not come about without a change in the social order. It therefore campaigns for a reduced prison population, genuine alternatives to custody and a less authoritarian regime in prisons.

Meanwhile, responsibility for the prison population is fragmented amongst the judiciary, the parole system, the social services, the prison medical service, the prison officers and, of course, the Home Office itself. If each of these remains a fearful and punitive group, determined to prove it is not lax on the social disorder of others then each contributes to the sense that society is dominated by a 'law and order' problem which demands ever more barbaric solutions. □

UNEMPLOYMENT

I'm going mad

Moyra Doorly talks to young women school leavers

ANN IS 21 and has been unemployed for a year. 'At school I wanted to be an electrician but the careers officer said I was silly and that no one would employ me because I would run off and get married and have babies. But I was only 16 at the time and you don't think of those things then . . . The careers officer told me to choose a job from the list, things like a nurse, hairdresser, secretary, horrible jobs like that.'

Now that's a quote and a half for anyone looking at discrimination against young women in the job market.

Unemployment is all too frequently seen as a problem for 'the boys'. But, of the 115,547 school leavers driven last month to claim social security, or unemployment benefit, 48,694 were young women. And this ignores the (approximately) 211,125 young people propelled into the scramble for jobs at the end of last summer term – none of whom will be able to claim, or feature in the official statistics, until the new academic year. For this group, there are no sex-ratio figures, but it is reasonable to assume that they are much the same as for the claimants. Even restricted to the area of 'horrible' low-paid work then, young women are finding it as hard as young men to get jobs.

Ann is one of a group of unemployed young women who meet once a week at the Islington Girls Project in North London, which organises activities exclusively for girls in the borough. 'The meetings are held primarily as a social occasion. Isolation is a big problem for them,' explained Clara Mulherron, one of the workers at the project.

Not all the young women who attend the meetings are as readily able as Ann is to contemplate crossing the great divide between so-called 'men's jobs' and 'women's jobs'. Before reaching the stage where 'any job will do', Paula, 20, unemployed for six months, had wanted to be a nursery nurse, but couldn't get onto a training scheme. Lamisi, 19, unemployed since May and living alone in a council flat, is studying for extra 'O' levels – 'I really want to work at the airport' – and Sabina, 20, is trying to get into college to train as a primary school teacher. 'I do voluntary work with children for experience.'

Ann isn't having much luck, though. She'd just been turned down for a job as a gardener. 'I didn't know what to wear,' she said, 'so I dressed formally in a skirt and jacket. They took one look at me and asked me what I would do if I was working late one evening and saw glue sniffers in the park. They thought I would run away screaming. I should have told them I see glue sniffers all the time where I live.'

If sexual equality in job choice hasn't exactly been achieved, the desire for a job, among these young women, is strong. It was a hot afternoon, admittedly (almost ninety degrees in fact), but they reacted with nothing short of incredulity to the suggestion that unemployment might be something less of a trauma for a young woman than for a young man (she can get married, can't she?). This might have been encouraging to anyone looking for evidence that more girls want careers outside the home as well as in it.

But this was a reaction borne as much of the experience of necessity as the desire for independence, job satisfaction and the rest. How on earth, they wanted to know, could their parents have managed on a single wage? Ann said, 'My mother worked, all my friends' mothers worked, they had to. Some people say that the man should go out and earn the money and the woman stay at home and look after the kids. But I've never known that to be the case. It might be in Surrey or Kent or somewhere like that.'

And, of course, as Lamisi pointed out, 'Not all marriages last forever. Lots of women have to look after children on their own. What happens if they can't get a job?' Paula was altogether more blunt: 'I need money like any man.' So these young women clearly aren't going to retire meekly into the home to leave jobs open for their male counterparts. 'If I couldn't get a job, marriage would be the last resort, the last,' said Paula.

THAT'S WHAT THEY ALL say – at first. Young girls leave school definitely wanting jobs. When the reality of unemployment hits, and they realise that a lot of women's jobs are actually very boring, they do turn to marriage. And Sabina did admit that if she just couldn't get a job, then: 'If I had to stay at home all day, at least I'd feel as if I was putting my time to good use if I had children to look after.'

The time scale varies. As Clara Mulherron pointed out, 'It usually takes three or four years before they accept being unemployed.' But marriage as a refuge or not, these girls want jobs now. 'It's no use going for the big jobs at, what, £3,000 a year. That's not reality. You have to go for any job.' Big jobs at £3,000 a year? Either Paula had miscalculated or we have the beginnings of a docile workforce, ready for a job at any price.

Perhaps it was the heat. As it built up, so came the tales of tramped streets, worn out shoes and closed doors.. And a bit of reversed discrimination. 'I went for a job as

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Some members of the Islington group: (l to r) Susan, Doris, Paula, Ingrid, Lamisi, Sonia

a childminder and a man got it. I shouldn't have been annoyed, but I was,' Ann said. Poor Ann, she can't win whichever way she turns. 'I wish I knew what goes on in employers' minds.' Then Paula began to seethe; her defences were down. 'I don't know what I'm going to do, I mean I just don't. Sometimes when I hear about all these burglaries and muggings and things, I think I'll have to go out and thieve it.'

Lamisi was evidently embarrassed at this and explained sincerely that of course it was hard, especially living alone and trying to pay bills, but that petty crime wasn't the answer. 'Oh no, I wouldn't do it,' Paula said, 'because of the consequences. But sometimes . . . oh God!'

On the subject of petty crime, this group was clearly of the opinion that it's an activity strictly for the boys. And this seems to correspond to a general pattern. Among the rural unemployed, for instance, chances are that it's the men who make some on the side with a bit of poaching or rustling. Which isn't to say that, for equality's sake, young women should make an attempt to open up opportunities for themselves in the underworld. But men have a tendency to presume the freedom to take action, which many women don't.

The black market of labour seems to be a male preserve, too. Here, it's largely male skills which are in demand – building, wiring, car repairs, carpet laying, etc – which women don't have and are even discouraged, like Ann was, from acquiring. The fact that this market is accessible through an old mates' network makes matters worse. Women tend to find extra income by looking after other people's children, or doing a bit of cleaning.

It's always said that the prospect of being stuck at home all day hurts a man particularly, it offends his dignity and all that. Paula: 'When I have to stay in the house, I feel like I'm going mad. If you have friends nearby it's not so bad. But if not and you can't afford the bus fare, then you're stuck.'

Ann's brother is unemployed. 'He lies around the house all day doing nothing. He won't even help with the housework or make a cup of tea. My father won't do anything in the house. My mother always had to do two jobs, her job and the housework. My sisters helped though and so did I.' 'It hits them more,' according to Sabina. 'Men expect to be out working, not staying at home helping with the housework.' Ann's brother would probably agree with that. 'They're just lazy,' said Paula.

RESEARCH has shown that unemployed girls are far less likely to take advantage of leisure facilities and youth clubs, or to develop interests and hobbies, than unemployed young men. That's why there's a need for the Islington Girls' Project. Elsewhere, boys tend to hog the pool tables and stand on the sidelines jeering at girls' attempts to play football. So the project lays on these activities, and many more besides, to encourage young women – of school age and older – to make more use of their leisure time.

It's probably conditioning, but most young women don't, or can't, stand up for themselves. So the young women at the project (and the unemployed group is only part of it) are unusual in that they do, or are beginning to. They produce rough magazines with titles like *What Girls Can Do* and *Danger, Young Women At Work*. And the contents spill over with a mixture of despair from the contributors who are unemployed; questions of what feminism actually is – feminism is always asking for a double Big Mac, never feeling guilty when you hate the kids, never being put on valium and definitely not wearing high-heeled shoes and corn plasters – and tales of the success of girls-only nights at this or that youth club.

But if men achieve status through their jobs, where do women get theirs? 'Families and jobs are both important to a woman,' Sabrina thought. 'I don't know about that,' said Paula. 'I just want money in my pocket.' Lamisi looked thoughtful then agreed with Sabina and Ann. 'If a woman is beautiful she has everything,' she said, which just goes to show that it's not easy to conform to every rule in the feminist handbook.

So what does the future hold for these young women? 'Nothing,' Paula replied immediately. 'I mean . . . God . . . there's nothing. If I don't get a job in five years, I'll leave the country, go somewhere and lead the country life.' That got lots of laughs. When Sabina admitted that she did, in fact, have a place at college for September, there was a silence – more, perhaps, of resignation than envy. If Lamisi can be an air hostess then she'll be happy. And Ann: 'I can only think of today. What you are is what you do today. I think I'll start making use of my time and go to some music workshops. Then maybe I'll get work playing my guitar. But if I had to say what I'd really like to do with my life, then I wish I could be rich and live in the Bahamas.' □

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed (on postcards, please).

☐ Mrs Blanche Clunn, of Broadwalk, Saltash, another widow whose late husband was buried in the churchyard in September is worried that stonemasons may have put the wrong headstone on the grave. She is concerned that she might have to have the grave reopened. 'They seem to be burying people too quickly these days and with all these mistakes I don't want to be buried in the wrong grave with someone else rather than my husband. – *Western Morning News* (A. L. Dennis)

☐ Carnivorous skeletons are rare and only one other has been found in Britain, although small collections have been discovered over southern England. Dinosaurs did not venture north of Watford, one expert said. – *The Times* (Simon Gold)

☐ Graham Hodgson, aged 17, of Hatfield, Hertfordshire, has been made redundant from his first job three hours after starting. Mr Martin Casserley, managing director of Stevenage Insurance Brokers, said yesterday: 'A takeover deal with another man fell through, and we are closing our Welwyn Garden City office.' Graham would receive a week's wages, he added. – *Guardian* (Ken Crichton)

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Communities of interest

If people's political interests are not best represented in class terms, are they to be found in geographical or 'biological' communities? Peter Hain takes up the argument

THE SCENE in Putney on election night must have been similar in many other constituencies. I had returned from the count to join people who had worked their hearts out for a Labour victory. Amid the tears of defeat and disappointment, there was a moving spirit of defiance: 'Let's start campaigning right away to win next time,' everyone said.

But what sort of 'campaigning'? For Labour's steady decline since 1951 to the crisis point of 9 June owed as much to failures of strategy as of policy.

The Party's whole style of politics needs changing radically. Where the old guard Right relied on 'fix-it' politics in Town Halls and Westminster, Labour's new Left has been obsessed with internal battles. Both wings have seriously neglected the task of actively winning support for socialism at the grass roots. As a result the Party has become remote from the people. Why should voters react positively to Labour workers at election time when they never see any during the rest of the year?

At the heart of the problem is the priority given to electoral politics. This may have sufficed when there was solid Labour support which had only to be 'got out' on polling day. But if so, it is inadequate now, when every vote has to be fought for. Although the Labour Party has adopted radical policies, it remains remarkably conservative about political action. Both Right and Left alike operate as if it were still the age of the traditional working-class community and the big public meeting.

The old geographical communities have fragmented, leaving people who rely increasingly on national television for their political knowledge. Changes in class structure, a drift out of inner cities and a disintegration of the old industrial heartlands – all these have undermined Labour's traditional, and increasingly outdated, appeal to male manual workers in manufacturing.

WITHOUT SUCCUMBING to a false nostalgia over old working-class communities, the fact remains that solidarity and support for socialism could more easily be built in neighbourly terraced streets with large factories nearby, than in today's high-rise council blocks where people won't open their doors, and where workplaces are dispersed. We must therefore locate new sources of potential political solidarity. First, through 'residential communities' – neighbourhood-based and principally concerned with environmental issues: housing, noise, traffic, etc; and second through 'sectional communities' – women, claimants, black people, for example.

Yet Labour Party activity goes on oblivious. When something needs to be done, a meeting is called to discuss doing something about it – and that usually means calling another meeting! You can happily spend every night of the week and sometimes whole weekends attending Party meetings, and talking only to the fellow converted.

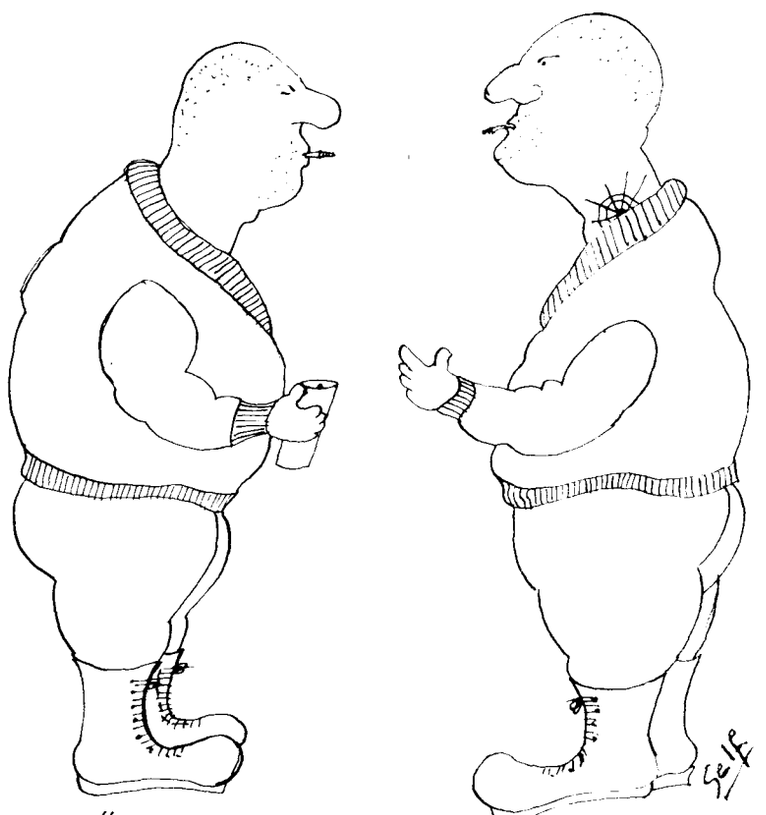
At these meetings, motions are usually discussed, demanding this or that, and passed up the ladder of Party organisations – with 'activists' then retiring to the pub, content at having done their bit for socialism, though doubtless 'selling out' on their resolution.

This combination of 'meetingitis' and 'resolutionary politics' has become a substitute for the much more demanding and difficult task of actively campaigning for socialist policies. It also leads to political agoraphobia, where internal organisational politics reign supreme, making the Party seem irrelevant to the very voters to whom we appeal come elections.

The lesson is fairly simple: Labour must root its socialism back in the people. Only by doing that will it be possible to retain a left-wing programme and win mass support in a political environment now deeply hostile to socialist progress.

WHAT IS required is a new strategy of community politics. Instead of leaping into life at elections, local Parties should be campaigning continuously throughout the year. This is not a prescription for the kind of frenzied activity in which the far Left and some radical community action groups have specialised – where high-profile campaigning collapses after a short period, leaving activists exhausted and ordinary people even more cynical.

That kind of instant politics provides no basis for a long-term strategy for socialist transformation. Instead, some fairly basic things need to be done. First, Party election candidates should if possible be selected well in advance, and should start work in the community, mounting personal canvasses,



"LETS' GET COMPLETELY PISSED AND THEN GO AND JOIN THE LABOUR PARTY..."

Jeff Self

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taking up local issues, dealing with case-work, and publicising such activity.

In two of the London constituencies where this was done – Putney and Dulwich – the Labour vote held up better than could have been expected against the national swing, and the campaigns conducted were said by outside observers to be among the best in the country.

Another modest change would be to allow community groups to use Party headquarters and facilities like meeting rooms and duplicators. In this way, local Parties could come to be seen both as the natural allies of, for example, tenants' associations, and the natural focus for local campaigning.

Beyond this, the aim should be to forge a three-way link between workplaces, the neighbourhood and political organisation. With rare exceptions, the Party has stuck to electoral politics, community groups to their residential base and unions to their workplaces. Such compartmentalisation of activity has weakened each. The Party has had no real extra-parliamentary links, community groups have lacked political or industrial muscle, and unions have pursued sectional interests, leading to their isolation.

Encouragement should also be given to radical new women's sections in local Parties. Feminism has made a huge impact inside the Party recently, and this could develop to involve women outside, with women's sections bridging the gap to women isolated at home and confronted by specific problems. Meanwhile, black people have not been involved – either because their support has been taken for granted, or because of clumsy moves to colonise and co-opt them. The black community contains different cultures, and those likely to be politically active will wish to have a degree of autonomy and independence which the Party's traditional structure does not allow. There could be an important role here for Labour 'Ethnic Minorities Groups', loosely linked to constituency parties, yet given proper representation within them.

Another crucial area is youth. Working-class youngsters, in particular, no longer inherit a propensity to vote Labour from their parents. And rather than relying on the 19th century slogans of its *Militant* dominated youth section, the Party would do well to examine imaginative tactics pioneered by the Anti Nazi League and Rock Against Racism, as a way of fusing socialist politics with the popular youth culture of the day.

LABOUR's organisation must be modernised in line with the political changes. It is still based on techniques pioneered generations ago. The national and regional structure is Victorian. The approach to canvassing is abysmal: 'Are you Labour?' 'Yes/No/Bugger off' – and on to the next doorstep. Election literature is about as attractively presented as material from Jehovah's Witnesses – and consequently read about as much. Local Party leaflets are written in a style perhaps appreciated by the socialist faithful, but with no prospect of communicating anything to anyone else.

One encouraging sign has been the launching of more local newsletters. Delivered to each home and deliberately written in a way which involves residents, encourages feedback and covers local issues, the most successful ones eschew left-wing jargon. But, having gained an audience from people more concerned with local problems than with the fine print of Party policy, it is possible to explain socialist ideas and, above all, identify Labour with people.

With political views more and more shaped by television and in any case formed by a deeply conservative culture, the Left must find a way of making direct links with people. That may mean doing something about broken pavements which cause accidents to pensioners. Or it may mean campaigning with tenants suffering from chronic dampness in their council homes.

In other words, without resorting to the populism and sheer opportunism of so much Liberal 'community politics', it means taking seriously those issues which touch people's lives most immediately.

On its own, this will not be enough, of course. Labour needs new, radical leadership. Policy must be shaped to meet the needs of the 1990s, and the Party must stop harking back to the past. But local intervention will be crucial, because that is where socialism can be brought face to face with the electorate.

There seemed to be more Labour workers in the general election than for a long time, many of them young and enthusiastic. Branch meetings in the wards since have been bigger than for many years.

If all this energy can be channelled into a new grassroots strategy to rebuild the base of the Party, then the prospect for Labour will not be as bleak as it looked when the votes were counted in June.

Peter Hain

Peter Hain's new book on Labour's future, The Democratic Alternative, *will be published by Penguin on 25 August, price £2.50.*

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LEGAL SYSTEM

Public prosecutors

Richard Kinsey compares Scottish and English systems

> There is no person who holds the lives and characters of his fellow citizens more in the hollow of his hands . . . he (the procurator fiscal) has the power to make or mar the reputation of every citizen in his locality. (Hansard, 23.3.1927)

The power of the procurator fiscal – the Scottish public prosecutor – to intervene in and direct police investigations and to decide whether or not to initiate criminal proceedings is much more than a power over the individuals concerned.

It is also a power to decide social policy by determining which categories of crimes, in which areas and for what reasons, will be prosecuted. And it is a power to formulate the broad contours of penal policy by deciding in which court and with which sentencing powers, to proceed. In short, over and above the purely legal aspects of particular cases, the fiscal has investigative, policy-making and quasi-judicial functions, as well as a crucial degree of control over the police.

In England and Wales, such decisions are usually taken by police officers, acting under the authority of the Chief Constable. Thus the police both investigate and prosecute crime, a unique and fundamentally flawed procedure. The police, when deciding whether or not to prosecute, are expected to evaluate both the methods and the results of their own investigations. (Indeed, although most forces can now call upon the advice of their prosecuting solicitors' departments, police officers still regularly appear as prosecution advocates in the Magistrates Courts.)

Inevitably, police prosecution decisions will reflect their own definition of policing problems and priorities, which are eventually reproduced and thereby reinforced in the subsequent statistics. The worst of it, however, is that these 'operational' decisions are settled behind closed doors, often by officers who may have been directly involved with both victim and offender. There is no opportunity for outside evaluation of particular cases; no effective public accountability; no policy review other than indirectly through the courts. Where decisions have been made *not* to prosecute, as is often the case in sexual assaults, for example, the courts are powerless.

When the government publishes the White Paper on public prosecution in England and Wales (probably in November, with the second reading of a re-vamped Police Bill) the key questions will be: What structures of local and national accountabil-

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ity will be introduced? What policy criteria will be established and how will they be reviewed? Will it be the police or the new 'Crown Prosecutor' who takes the critical decision whether or not to initiate court proceedings?

ONE OF THE MAJOR flaws in the Scottish system is that there is no mechanism of *local* consultation and accountability. Working out of 48 District Offices throughout Scotland, the procurators fiscal are responsible only to the Lord Advocate. While the Lord Advocate issues both detailed instructions and general policy guidelines, in practice the fiscals' office is a domain unto itself. Decisions are taken in private and rarely, if ever, are they questioned, although potentially controversial cases will be passed up the hierarchy for the Lord Advocate or one of his deputes to decide. Inconsistency between district offices is thus difficult to assess. As a political appointee, the Lord Advocate is accountable to Parliament for general policy, but not individual cases. Parliamentary questions are rare, so that the Lord Advocate and the Crown Office can in practice determine the general direction and even the effective content of the Scottish criminal law by administrative fiat. The system was to remain relatively uncontentious until the Glasgow rape case and the notorious decision not to prosecute.

Anxious to avoid such problems, the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure in England and Wales stressed the need for an 'open and fair' system. They recommended a locally-based prosecution service, under the aegis of the present local authority police committees, to whom the Crown Prosecutors would be accountable in much the same way as the Chief Constables.

Although the commission envisaged the new authority as having only consultative and advisory powers on matters of policy, it is now clear that even this recommendation will be rejected by the government. Last week, following an unpublished report of an inter-departmental working party which included the Director of Public Prosecutions, the government was advised, in direct contradiction of the Royal Commission, to favour an integrated national system. It would be formally accountable to Parliament through the Attorney General. The DPP would have extended policy-making powers. In other words, it will parallel very closely the structures – and all the problems – of the Scottish system.

SUCH AN APPROACH south of the border would magnify all the Scottish flaws. With a population in England and Wales ten times that of Scotland, and with a case load in excess of 2,500,000 prosecutions a year, accountability through Parliament would be, at best, nominal. As the Royal Commission pointed out, it would inevitably become bureaucratically top-heavy. Further, according to the Royal Commission, 'there would be powerful forces at work tending to promote the interests of those at the centre rather than of those on the periphery whom the organisation is, in fact, there to serve and to work with – the local police, courts and community.' (Para. 7.22).

These observations are solidly backed up by research. An extremely thorough and rigorous study, *Prosecution in the Public Interest*★, examined in detail the criteria employed by fiscals in exercising their discretion to prosecute. They found a clear tendency to standardise decision-making according to rigidly legalistic criteria and administrative needs. Only very rarely do the fiscals exercise their investigatory powers and only in a mere 8 per cent of cases reported to them is the decision taken not to proceed. In a busy office, the fiscals are almost completely dependent upon the police for their information.

In one crucial respect, a separation between the police and the prosecution is maintained. It is the fiscal – not the police – who takes the initial decision to take the case to court. Although this is seen primarily as a legal question of the sufficiency of evidence, it does provide an opportunity to weed out trivial or vexatious police charges. It thus provides a check on the more extreme incidences of the abuse of power by, for example, police harassment.

At present in England and Wales police decide to initiate court proceedings. Under the Royal Commission's scheme, which this time has found favour with the inter-departmental working party, it will remain so. Although the Crown Prosecutor would be given the power to vary or drop charges at a later stage, the Royal Commission 'would leave with the police complete responsibility for investigating offences and for making the initial decision whether or not to bring the matter before a court (that is under present procedures whether to charge or to apply to the court for issue of a summons or warrant of arrest) or to take no proceedings'. (Para 7.7)

This is the heart of the whole matter. If this key decision is left with the police, any real independence of a new system will be undermined. In little else but name, the present relationship between the police and 'their' prosecuting solicitors' departments will remain unchanged. It is a financially inexpensive option which is clearly politically attractive to Government Ministers: they can appear to make changes while leaving justice undone. Thus, the government will have taken the worst of the Scottish system, and left the best. □

*Prosecution in the Public Interest *by Jackie Tombs and Sue Moody; Scottish Academy Press, 1982.*

Richard Kinsey is lecturer in law at Edinburgh University and an executive member of the Scottish Council for Civil Liberties.

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UNIONS

Behind the rhetoric

John McIlroy on the reality of union opposition to Tebbit

'EVANS READY to face gaol over Tebbit law' was the message in the headlines. The TGWU, Moss Evans asserted in his speech to the delegates at his union's July bi-annual conference, would disregard any court orders or fines if threatened with government legislation. His speech was of a piece with the rhetoric with which most union leaders have sought to resist the 1980 and 1982 Employment Acts. Even the normally reticent and statesmanlike David Basnett could inform last year's GMWU conference: 'Let me give this warning to the employers. We will not stand idly by. If they seek recourse to the law we will use our industrial muscle at the company and industrial level to defeat them and we will bring in other unions as well.'

Reality has been different. This spring, Asian textile workers striking over recognition of the TGWU and the victimisation of their shop steward at Aire Valley Yarns, West Yorkshire, received an unexpected boost. Fellow members at Charles Busfield of Guiseley refused to dye wool coming from Atlantic Yarns, which contracted out Aire Valley products. Under the new 'secondary action' legislation Atlantic Yarns sought, and were granted, an injunction against both a Busfield shop steward and the local TGWU official, Peter Booth. The TGWU promptly accepted the court order and denied any connection with the sympathy boycott.

There were many precedents for this denial, in practice, of conference rhetoric: a strike at Chloride Batteries soon after the implementation of the 1980 Act; a picket against cowboy drivers on Merseyside; the strike over victimisation and sexual harassment at the boutique Lady at Lord John in Liverpool. In all these, Britain's biggest union has either disassociated itself from the action or accepted court injunctions.

Most unions involved in the score of cases produced by legislation since 1980 have responded in the same way: measured retreat. In some cases, as in Aire Valley or the Merseyside lorry drivers, the injunction is against the union officials. Where the law is used against strikers themselves, as in the Laurence Scott and Chloride disputes, it has been when they are already relatively isolated and lacking official union support. And here too the injunctions have been accepted; under the impact of the recession, ordinary members look to their officials for a lead which is not forthcoming.

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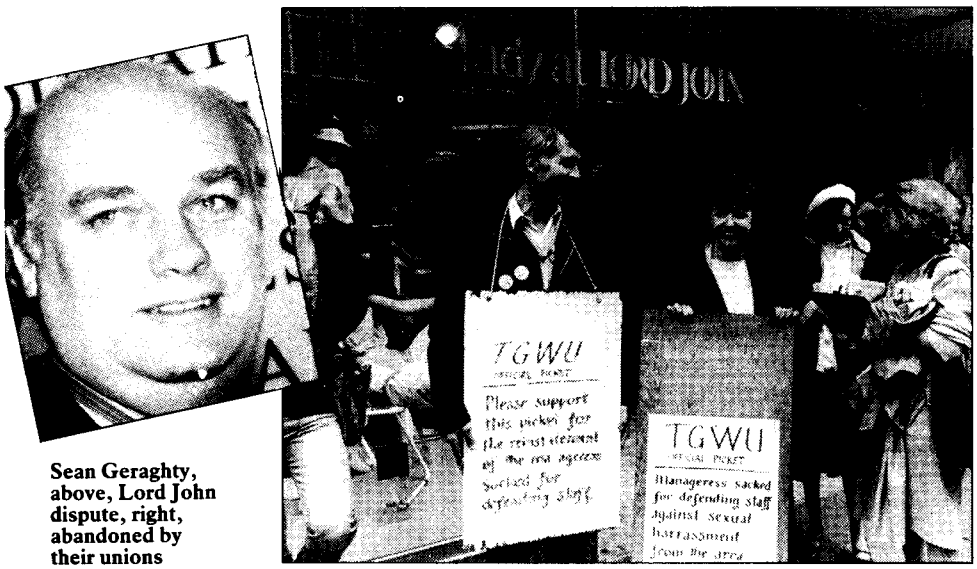
TGWU
Please support this picket for the reinstatement of the rep against for defending staff
TGWU
Manageress sacked for defending staff against sexual harassment from the area

Liverpool Daily Post & Echo

Sean Geraghty, above, Lord John dispute, right, abandoned by their unions

In fact, it is difficult to disentangle the official union response to the law from the general response to the recession. As far back as 1980, the TGWU Region 5 sent its branches a circular urging them to be cautious and avoid industrial action. On the whole, history shows that union officials have always complied with injunctions. It is the experience under the 1971 Industrial Relations Act, where the rank and file had the confidence and capability to take action themselves, which can now be seen to have been abnormal and distinctive. It is that independence which is strikingly absent today.

WITH HINDSIGHT the pretensions of the unions over the legislation were unmasked as long ago as last summer during the Geraghty affair. No more favourable terrain for resistance than the NHS dispute, with its popular support, was likely to present itself. On 9 August 1982, the Newspaper Proprietors' Association obtained an injunction against eight named print union officials involved in organising a 24-hour stoppage in solidarity with the hospital workers. The SOGAT 1982 conference in May had, for example, voted for the TUC to expel any union collaborating with the legislation. The SOGAT branch secretary involved stated that any injunction would be ignored. Yet both SOGAT and the NGA which had also been amongst the unions most firmly opposed to the legislation decided to comply with the injunction once it was granted. EEPTU branch secretary, Geraghty, who did not, was specifically disowned by his union. The electricians' union strongly recommended its members *not* to withdraw labour and made clear that the union would not pay any consequent damages.

Far from the TUC organising resistance, the print unions justified their acquiescence in the High Court directive by claiming they were following the wishes of Albert Spanswick, chairman of the TUC Health Services Committee; he, it was alleged, had acted after consultation with Len Murray. Any possibility of further confrontation was removed by Mr Justice Leonard's well judged £350 fine on Geraghty – cleared by an anonymous donor. But the fragility of the unions' stance was underscored in December 1982 when the NGA, faced with the consequence of its policy of boycotting industrial tribunal hearings arising from the legislation, simply reversed it in order to appeal against a finding that it had unreasonably excluded a Liverpool printer from membership.

While the cases which have arisen have been brought under the 1980 legislation, it is difficult to see how the response would be any different under the 1982 Act which makes union funds liable rather than individual union representatives. Indeed TUC policy here has been carefully drafted to minimise the possibility of the confrontation its rhetoric constantly heralded. The eight-point plan adopted at the Special Congress in April 1982 involved the boycotting of closed shop ballots and public funds for union polls, withdrawal of union representatives from tribunal cases arising under the legislation and powers for the General Council to coordinate industrial action in support of unions faced by legal action. The latter crucial provision was, however, hedged around by some not very well publicised small print. Before support could be proffered the TUC would have to be in receipt of an official request from the union involved. It would have to feel that the union's actions were both *necessary and justified*. Its advice on the form and *continuation* of the action would have to be accepted. It would have to be assured of the response from other sections of the union not directly involved and from other unions represented in the workplace affected.

These criteria give the TUC centralised control over any serious opposition to the legislation. They would make its generalisation by the TUC very unlikely if the handling of ASLEF's dispute last year and the NGA's last month display the TUC view of what is necessary and justified. A union like the TGWU would have to achieve the almost impossible situation of having all its members of other organisations in the multi-union workplaces in which it operates out on national strike before the TUC would act. If this was achieved its support would hardly be needed anyway.

TUC staff took the greatest pains to ensure that policy should not go beyond these carefully drafted principles. For example, when the Employment Act Sub-Committee of the TUC Printing Industry Committee sought to toughen up the proposals, the relevant meeting was cancelled, allowing no opportunity for discussion before the April special conference. The Sub-Committee received a letter from the TUC Organisation and Industrial Relations Department *after* the Congress, arguing that the print unions should not be 'seen to be developing a campaign plan distinct and separate from that being pursued by the TUC'. And at Wembley itself no amendments to the platform were allowed.

In retrospect, it is clear that the policy of the TUC centre, around Len Murray and David Basnett, was, after the half-hearted experiment with the 1980 Day of Action, predicated on getting a Labour government back in. They did not want to accept the new Tory legislation, but nor did they want a confrontation which was seen as counter-productive to the election of a Labour government. This position of 'neither peace nor war' was perceived as a short-term holding operation until the unions could return to the precarious but ideal status quo of 1975. Given the conflicting factions on the General Council and the impact on unions of the economic situation, it could be little else. In practice, it proved tremendously difficult to restrain the Duffy-Chappell Right from taking money for postal ballots and seeking talks with the Tories. Earlier this year at least three TUC unions, BALPA, the Engineers and Managers Association and the British Association of Colliery Management did break ranks by responding to Tebbit's Green Paper.

Election day revealed the gamble lost. Bill Keys, who in April 1982 was comparing Tebbit's law to fascism and who moved his union's resolution on boycotting tripartite bodies at last year's TUC, is today in favour of talking to Tebbit. The 14-11 vote at the July General Council in favour of this reversal in policy could presage a recognition by the TUC majority that its policies have crumbled and that it must readjust its militant posture to its essentially moderate practice. Those who wish to tread the opposite path and make the General Council live up to its fine words will have an uphill task at Blackpool. □

SOMETHING YOU OUGHT TO KNOW ABOUT

The pressures of modern life tend to distract our attention from fundamental realities. There is a spiritual basis to life which many of us are now ignoring at the cost of our happiness and security. There are some eternal verities behind the teachings of all religions. In your own interest, learn something about these from THEOSOPHY, the Ageless Wisdom Religion.

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DIARY

Paul Foot

Wednesday, 8pm. The phone is off the hook and silence is enforced throughout the house with an iron hand. A miracle is being repeated: Lewis Grassic Gibbon is on the telly again. That wasn't his real name, by the way. He was Leslie Mitchell, son of Lilian Grassic Gibbon, born on an Aberdeenshire croft in 1901 and dying 35 years later after writing *A Scots Quair*, one of the greatest trilogies of novels in all our literature. About eight years ago, I got a train at nine o'clock in the morning which got into Inverness ten and a half hours later. By that time, I'd read the whole of *Sunset Song* and half of *Cloud Howe* (the third in the series, *Grey Granite*, now being shown on BBC2, took up most of the return journey). The lilting Scottish prose is difficult at first (for an Englishman, anyway) but, by the time the train reached the Scottish border, I was hypnotised. The BBC-2 series has got the Grassic Gibbon mood pretty well, but it misses out on the humour and is no substitute for the books, which are now widely available and, I hear with great rejoicing, selling very well indeed.

○

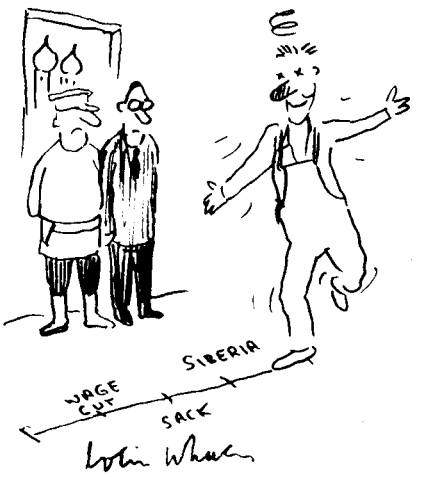
Two things about Leslie Mitchell annoyed the English literary establishment. He was Scottish, which was bad enough. Worse, he was a revolutionary socialist of the most uncompromising variety. A familiar criticism of the trilogy is that *Grey Granite* sticks too closely to the hard Communist Party line of the early Stalinist period. In fact, there's some doubt whether Leslie Mitchell ever joined the Communist Party. He wrote to his friend and co-author Hugh MacDiarmid that the Party wouldn't let him in for fear he would turn out a dissident. 'I hate capitalism', he wrote, shortly before his death. 'All my books are implicit or explicit propaganda. But because I'm a revolutionary I see no reason for gainsaying my own critical judgement.' While so many young Communist writers of the 1930s reined in their imagination to keep pace with their commitment, Lewis Grassic Gibbon allowed both to ride freely together. He was a master of words, but he reserved special contempt for words which floated about, meaning nothing and changing nothing. Of Ramsay Macdonald he wrote: 'Mr Macdonald has never succeeded in penetrating behind words to thought.' There are plenty of the like around today.

○

Thursday. Off to the New Half Moon theatre in the East End for a vigorous production of *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, Stephen Lowe's play of the famous socialist novel by Robert Tressell. Here are all those greedy, hypocritical capitalists and their politicians exploiting the workers while proclaiming their friendship with them. Surely there can't be any of these caricatures around nowadays? Well, I can think of one right away: Dr Rhodes Boyson, newly appointed Minister of Social Security. During the last Labour government the Tories, supported by Boyson, raised a terrific din on behalf of the children who had been brain-damaged by whooping cough vaccinations. When the Labour government finally agreed to a miserable once-for-all £10,000 per stricken family, the Tories shouted for a proper compensation scheme: a commitment which was instantly buried as soon as they were elected. Now, along comes Dr Boyson to reverse a decision by his predecessor that the £10,000 for these desperately needy families should not be taken into account for social security payments. Oh yes they should, says the Christian doctor. So, from now on, payments will be denied to these families if they have kept, or invested, any of the £10,000 which the Tories used to claim was not enough!

○

The second act of the play is rather long and I find myself gazing at the young, capacity audience, and marvelling at its enthusiasm and enjoyment. There are plenty of young socialists about today, just as idealistic and energetic as they ever were. Where are they going? At the end of the play there is an exchange about this. Harlow, a painter, partly convinced by the socialist arguments of his workmate Owen, says that he and his friends are 'putting up a Labour man'. Owen replied at once: 'It's a dead end. If we go into their game, if we enter their House of Parliament on the back of the unions, they'll just buy us off. We've got to hold out for the works, not go for the crumbs.' To



which Harlow replies, 'Just words, Frank.' Instead, he unfurls a banner, Workers Unite, and everyone claps. Plenty of people argued that way and unfurled banners like that in the old days, but most of them ended up treading the same weary Parliamentary road which Frank Owen warned against. It's not much use substituting a banner and a slogan for Frank's 'words'. The further we get from a past Labour government, the more people will forget how futile it all was; the more they will turn to new illusions; and the more vital it will be not to 'put up a Labour man' but to rebuild the class confidence at the rank and file which so many Labour men have so systematically ignored and weakened.

○

I enjoyed the *Daily Mail* headline over last week's news that the (fiddled) unemployment figures had jumped by 36,674 in July. It was, inevitably, 'BRITAIN ON THE MEND'. But there is a sub-editor there who deserves the rap for letting through a mistake in the sub-heading: '3M JOBLESS AGAIN BUT LAWSON IS HOPEFUL'. The 'but', of course, should have read 'and'; or more probably 'so'.

○

Looking forward to next summer, I'm glad that the West Indian tour is going ahead, and that it will not be wrecked by the few selfish English and West Indian cricketers who have sold out to South Africa for a few million pieces of silver. Isn't it time that Gooch, Boycott and the others realised that, without multiracialism, cricket is finished, and that you can't have multi-racial sport in a society whose central principle is division (and exploitation) by race? Perhaps they (and those like them who feel that 'human nature' will always capitulate to the highest offer) will remember the example of Clive Lloyd and Michael Holding. Lloyd is at the end of his cricketing career, and even Holding is getting on. Both would be paid fantastic sums if they played representative cricket in South Africa, and would not have much to lose. But both have refused – on principle. Michael Holding made the point that the last time his people were bought and sold it was called slavery.

ROGER WODDIS

Distortionary tale

'We got it wrong. We are sorry.' – the Sun *on being censured by the Press Council for fabricating a 'world exclusive' interview with the widow of Falklands VC Sgt Ian McKay.*

The Paper Which Supports Our Boys
And likes to make a lot of noise
About the truth it rarely speaks
Exhibits by its tear-stained cheeks
Its Grief at having got it wrong
And muddied up its billabong.

A certain man named Ananias
Displayed a wanton kind of bias
In favour of the downright lie;
But even he forebore to cry
And showed a greater shame than most
By promptly giving up the ghost.

Another man, called C. P. Scott,
Who had no time for tommy-rot,
Said, 'Facts are sacred, comment's free.'
But time has dimmed the old decree:
Today we weep for anyone
Believing in the sorry *Sun*.

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An August adventure

Claudia Wright describes President Regan's efforts to find surrogates who will fight for him in Chad

Washington

IN THEORY, according to Colonel Robert McFarlane, President Reagan's Deputy National Security Advisor, military interventions in crises in faraway places are good for a president's popularity. By this standard a military crisis in Chad in August would be almost perfect for Reagan's polls – if the crisis weren't real and the risk of failure high.

August is a good time for US intervention because the congress is on vacation. Chad is remote enough for most Americans to have never heard of it, and congressmen about to go on holiday aren't likely to insist on exercising the War Powers Resolution, the congressional authority to control the deployment of US forces in faraway places. Military intervention in Chad is also inexpensive by current US standards. By arranging $25 million in finance out of a military contingency fund, the administration has made it easier for Congress to look the other way. The fund has already been voted, and congressmen don't want to consider what contingencies the money should or should not be used for. Not since the first Gulf of Sirte incident of August 1981, when two Libyan jets were shot down by US carrier-based aircraft, has anyone in Washington raised a voice above the hum of the office air conditioners to query US policy towards Libya, or challenge the administration view that Colonel Muammar Gadafy, the Libyan leader, deserves a licking wherever the administration can find the opportunity. Chad seemed as good a place as any.

The fighting in Chad is mostly done at long range. One side withdraws under tank, artillery or aerial bombardment; the other side does the same when counter-attacked. The government, which is invisible and irrelevant outside N'Djamena, changes hands with whoever occupies the town. In addition to Libya, it is clear that Chad's neighbours, the regional African powers, Egypt, Israel, France, the United States and the Soviet Union all have a stake in the conflict, and everyone, according to their means, provides military equipment, munitions, advisers, and intelligence to keep their investments alive.

Since 1981 McFarlane, his superior at the White House, Willian Clark, William Casey and the CIA, and the two Secretaries of State, Alexander Haig and George Shultz, have made Chad one of the few covert operations the administration might justifiably call a success. In 1981 Goukkouni Oueddei, President of the Transitional National Union Government (GUNT) was persuaded by US, French and African pressures to ask Libyan forces backing his regime to withdraw from Chad. As soon as they departed, the US promoted an attack on GUNT from Hissein Habre, whom Goukkouni had sent packing to the Sudan after the civil war of 1980. He was able to reverse the outcome of the earlier round of fighting, and evict Goukkouni from N'Djamena.

The Reagan administration was successful in restoring Hissein Habre to power in June 1982 without anyone in the United States noticing. But in that success lay the seeds of this summer's over-confidence and political miscalculation. In recent days, the Reagan administration has built up such a visible stake in Habre, it can't risk letting him fall. On the other hand, the administration doesn't dare risk a domestic reaction by intervening forcefully enough to make certain Habre will remain where he is. Unlike the President's response to the alleged Libyan invasion plot against the Sudan last February, it isn't possible to despatch AWACS and the Sixth Fleet, declare a victory, and go home.

The administration has therefore tried to solve its problem by getting others – they would be called surrogates if Moscow was footing the bill – to do the fighting instead. President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire initially agreed to despatch 2,000 paratroops, and he may send more; but they are kept out of the fighting, their role being limited to guarding strong points in and around N'Djamena. For his part Mobutu has bargained for a sizable payoff from the administration. The White House had also hoped that President Mitterand might play the second surrogate, but he detests Habre and although he is willing to enlarge French participation in the covert war to blunt Goukkouni's offensive, he fears overt intervention would simply escalate Libyan involvement.

In mid-July, according to US officials, the National Security Council decided on a strategy of sending whatever military aid would be necessary to prod France into direct intervention. Paris was told that the US would supply and pay for heavy transport aircraft to fly in helicopters, long-range artillery, and other equipment for French forces to operate. The US offer also included aerial tankers to refuel French interceptor aircraft flying north against Libyan aircraft supporting the forces of Goukkouni. AWACS aircraft, flown from bases 900 miles away in Egypt and the Sudan, would be available to monitor enemy aircraft and, if necessary, coordinate French air strikes. In outline, the plan was similar to the Franco-American intervention during the two Shaba insurgencies in southern Zaire in 1977 and 1978. At that time, however, Moroccan, Belgian and French troops were available to do the fighting.

The despatch of US-made 'Redeye' ground-to-air missiles was announced by Washington as an inducement to French intervention, and encouragement to Habre's forces to counter-attack at Faya-Largeau. This US pressure increased the stakes in the fight over Faya-Largeau, which was retaken this week by Habre with French military assistance, and increased Libya's intervention.

ADMINISTRATION officials also met with congressional resistance to part of the bargain that had been struck with Mobutu

President Mobutu shows President Reagan his brand-new, leopard-skin pillbox hat

AP

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for Zairean intervention. In the eyes of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Zaire is one of the most corrupt US aid recipients on earth, and in the last two years the committee has voted to eliminate most of the military assistance the administration requested.

As Habre's position worsened and the administration sought help from Zaire, Mobutu devised two schemes for obtaining the aid which Congress is blocking – through the backdoor in Chad. When the State Department first told House members in late July that $10 million-worth of vehicles, small arms, uniforms, and ammunition were to be shipped to Chad, they said at least half would go to the Zairean troops in N'Djamena, and they would take this material home with them when the crisis passed. Congressmen objected to this 'backdoor aid' and at a secret briefing of the House Subcommittee on Africa on 28 July, Chester Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, retreated. 'Major Items' of the emergency US aid to Chad, he said, would not be premitted to go to Zaire.

Mobutu, who arrived in Washington on 2 August, then struck another backdoor bargain. According to the terms of this deal – which has so far been kept secret – the administration agreed to make a large purchase of Zairean-produced cobalt for the US strategic stockpile which is maintained in case of war or supply disruption. In July 1981, the Regan administration bought 5.2 million pounds of the metal for $78 million. Since then the international market price has plummeted – from $15 per pound for the stockpile purchase to $5.86 per pound at the moment. This has forced Zaire to stockpile its own cobalt and to obtain international loans using the cobalt as collateral.

On 29 July, the Reagan administration came to the rescue by publicly announcing a call for tenders for a purchase of 6.5 million pounds of cobalt. Officially, this is an open bidding contest and the decision will not be made until after the closing date, 31 August. In fact, according to US officials, the decision has already been made – and confirmed to Mobutu during his Washington visit – that Zaire has been chosen for the purchase. Details of the price the US will pay have not been disclosed.

If Mobutu was reluctant to intervene in Chad without this kind of payoff (and US security guarantees as well), it is understandable that President Mitterrand has been reluctant to intervene without any kind of bargain with Washington at all. The Reagan administration could not have timed its pressure for French intervention more ineptly – the dollar rose to the record 8-franc level on 2 August, and the timid Federal Reserve Bank response did little to remedy the situation on France's behalf.

French reluctance has produced sharp private criticism of President Mitterrand among Washington officials. A Senate official accused the Elysée of 'theoretically supporting the Chadians and on the other hand of making money with the Libyans'. He claimed Air France had been secretly negotiating to sell Libyan Airlines Boeing 707 aircraft. Under the terms of the US embargo on Trade with Libya and of the licenses for the original export of the aircraft to France, Washington claims the right to control third-party sales. In Libya's case, Boeing has been prohibited from selling aircraft, directly or indirectly. 'Someone is trying to pull a fast one,' the Senate official claimed. 'The French are like that.' The French embassy in Washington denies that any such deal is in the works.

The publicity the administration has generated to stimulate further French intervention will backfire if it fails to produce its intended effect. It has already prompted sceptical questions from the press, as well as editorial suggestions that the Reagan administration may be beginning yet another military adventure. Even an audience that enjoys aerial dogfights against the Libyan airforce is not eager to engage US pilots or advisers in the Chadian civil war. US officials who oppose the White House strategy of magnifying the Libyan element of the crisis think that the French position may be the only way of limiting Reagan's folly. □

ITALY

Craxi's cage

John Earle profiles Italy's new Prime Minister

Rome

A THIN RED LINE extends along Europe's southern underbelly, with socialists at the head of governments in Portugal, Spain, France, Malta, Greece and, now, Italy. But how red, or at least pink, is this Italian coalition headed for the first time by a Socialist, Bettino Craxi?

Craxi, a 49-year-old Milanese, came to power after a general election which he himself precipitated in order to raise his party's share of the vote from 9.6 per cent in the last legislature to, he hoped, around 15 per cent. In the event, the increase was marginal, to 11.4 per cent. But the Christian Democrats lost 5.4 per cent and, though still the strongest party, were willing in their mood of despondency to let him have the premiership; with the aim, no doubt, of tripping him up in a few months.

Craxi thus lacks a popular mandate. Socialist ministers have had to take second place in the cabinet, where 16 of the 30 members are Christian Democrats. Besides the Prime Minister, the Socialists have five ministries, the Republicans and Social Democrats three each and the right-wing Liberals two. The key economic portfolio at finance is held by Bruno Visentini (Republican), who is chairman of Italy's most successful multinational, Olivetti.

Any socialist ambitions of the Cabinet minority will thus be smothered by orthodox, right-wing economic policies of the

majority. The priority is to reduce inflation, still around 16 per cent, through retrenchment, before any expansion which might make a dent in the two to three million unemployed (accurate statistics do not exist). It is 'the policy of the two times', for which the Communists and others on the Left have always attacked the Right. The coalition hopes that the unions can be persuaded to accept a freeze on wage rises in real terms for three years, and possibly to trim further the wage indexation system. The Christian Democrats, to quote the Communist leader Enrico Berlinguer, have put Craxi in a cage to which they hold the key.

WHILE TERRORISM is no longer an immediate threat, organised crime is. The government has to act more effectively against the Mafia in Sicily and the Camorra in Naples, which are gradually extending their control over local economic life. The government has two ministers from these areas, the Sicilian Nino Gullotti as Minister for Cultural Assets, and the Neapolitan Antonio Gava as Minister of Posts. Both are experienced in the Christian Democrat system of power, which has contributed to the state of affairs in those regions. They will hardly, to put it mildly, provide a force for change.

Morality in public life has been an issue since the revelations about the intrigues of the P2 secret masonic lodge overwhelmed the government of Arnaldo Forlani two years ago. One name on the list of alleged members was that of the Social Democrat leader, Pietro Longo, though he has always in public denied membership of that lodge. Longo has for the first time entered a government, as Craxi's Minister for the Budget.

The Socialists are scarcely in a credible position to improve public morals. They

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borrowed money from the late Roberto Calvi's Banco Ambrosiano, and the exact relationship between him and certain of their leaders has never been clarified. This year, the Socialists' image has been tarnished with the arrest of their regional premier of Liguria and of members of the Piedmontese region and Turin city administrations for misappropriation and corruption in the award of public contracts.

In NATO affairs, the Craxi leadership has been faithful to the United States. The last Defence Mininster, the Socialist Lelio Lagorio, was regularly singled out for attack by Moscow for going ahead with the cruise base at Comiso in South Sicily, where the missiles are now to be installed next spring instead of this year. Comiso, nearer incidentally to the Arab world than the Soviet Union, has caused heart-searchings among a number of party members. Francesco de Martino, Craxi's predecessor as party secretary till 1976, has declared he will vote against the party on missiles if the issue comes up in parliament.

Another point which irks de Martino is the Christian Democrat insistence, to which Craxi has apparently agreed, on breaking Communist-Socialist coalitions in local administrations, and on forming when possible combinations of the Rome coalition formula. At the municipal level, Left-wing coalitions – Bologna is the outstanding example – have gained an unrivalled reputation for better and more just administration in the years since the war. If Craxi can be held to this undertaking, it will mean an end to Communist-led councils in cities like Rome, Naples and Turin. In fact, in Naples the Christian Democrats have already unseated the respected Communist mayor, Maurizio Valenzi, and municipal elections are expected in the autumn.

What will be the effect of these policies on Socialist Party members? Little enough, probably, among those younger ones accustomed in recent years to concentrate on gaining and wielding power rather than on ideology. Craxi as secretary has devoted his energies to building an efficient party machine, answerable to himself.

What will be the effect on workers? A test will come soon, immediately after the summer holidays, when the government will have to mediate in negotiations for a new labour contract for private sector metalworkers. Talks were suspended in July when the then Labour Minister, Vincenzo Scotti, a Christian Democrat of the younger generation, fell out with the employers' federation, which is openly backed by Fiat. The new Labour Minister is a Socialist, Gianni de Michelis, a tempestuous, long-haired Venetian.

In its 91-year life, the Socialist Party has seen many deviate from its path – the Communists to the Left in 1921 and, going back a few years earlier, Benito Mussolini to the right. Until recently, a leading cartoonist used to depict Craxi in fascist uniform. This is probably an exaggeration and, at worst, he may prove no more than a hostage to misfortune. In fact, the same cartoonist has now taken to drawing him in ordinary clothes, but without trousers. □

SRI LANKA

Burning passions

Peter Hartnell describes how Nuwara Eliya was razed to the ground

TO ESCAPE the paralysing summer heat and ill health of the surrounding coastal areas of what was then called Ceylon, the British built Nuwara Eliya as a charming replica of rural England. Two weeks ago this small, and in many ways rather beguiling, Sri Lankan town became the focal point for much of the communal violence that has engulfed the island.

As the town burnt to charcoal and the Tamil inhabitants ran for their lives, I watched Sri Lankan soldiers on the spot stand idly by. While the officers in charge may have been in two minds about allowing the mob violence to spread, their rank and file were not. The soldiers on the street seemed quite willing to stand and look on as the inhabitants burnt one another's property, where this conformed to their own prejudices.

Nuwara Eliya is at the heart of tea plantation country: the western tourists' image of smiling tea pickers clad in brightly coloured cotton saris could almost exist here. Its remote position, perfect for idling tea magnates and holidaying imperial army officers, ensured that the town escaped the great social and economic movements of modern times, and much of the racial turmoil of the last 30 years of Sri Lankan history – until now.

The curfew on Friday 29 July was a farce, serving only to keep civilian cars off the road. Although the troops did not actively participate in the mayhem themselves, they certainly did nothing to discourage it: crowds were allowed to roam the town at will. Many of the casualties of that day poured into the back of our hotel, seeking what treatment they could find. They maintained that much of the damage was done by imported thugs and 'communists' from Kandy and further west. How else could it be that a seemingly peaceful community imploded and itself destroyed what had taken years to build?

The answer is not so straightforward. The Tamil refugees who took to the hills that evening, and pilfered everything in their path, were running from a violent expression of racial and class hatred. Nuwara Eliya's demography makes it a leading candidate for conflict of this nature. Most of the working population is composed of Tamil plantation workers, who were originally imported by the British from South India. This majority coexists with a moneyed Tamil middle class which owns 80 per cent of Nuwara Elija's shops and other businesses, as well as much of the town's sought-after real estate.

Singhalese revenge for recent political killings could therefore turn neatly to an area of dense Tamil population which had the added attraction of a vulnerable and wealthy elite. The Singhalese peasants who I saw smash and vandalise one particular provisions store were expressing not just a generalised hatred of a vociferous minority who demanded their own state, but also frustration with a shopkeeper to whom they had owed money for years.

The mixture in the primitive Singhalese molotov cocktails was a bland of economic and cultural bitterness.

WE HAD ALREADY been in Sri Lanka for 10 days, on honeymoon, before the events of 29 July. We had started in Colombo; we then fled to Kandy to escape the violence; when it followed us there, we moved to Nuwara Eliya. Yet subsequent reports confirmed that the damage done to Nuwara Eliya was at least the equal of anything experienced elsewhere. When we arrived it had a church, numerous Tudor style cottages, the finest golf course in Asia and the 'Hill Club'. From this former colonial gentlemen's club overlooking the town, much of the destruction was clearly visible. By dusk on Friday 29 July, not one building in the central street was left standing; fire had spread to the hills, too, engulfing shops, homes and buses in an orange glow.

At the Club, the manager complained that he had expected a coachload of about 50 eager German tourists but he now had to content himself with three stranded couples, two of them English and one American. The staff of 30, isolated from their Tamil families, put on a brave face in going about their duties, even insisting that I wear a tie for dinner. But all our bags had already been packed.

For the following two days we were prevented from leaving the hotel grounds, but we were able to discern a significant change in the attitude of the military. Where previously I had been left unmolested, I now wandered as close as I dared to gain a suitable vantage point but was spotted by a businesslike soldier who bundled me back into bounds with the help of the barrel of his old but menacing .303 rifle.

By Sunday evening it seemed that the Singhalese were sated, since the curfew was now being strictly enforced. A peace had fallen on the town, broken only by the occasional army jeep and the immutable sounds of Sri Lanka's unique bird life. We obtained our curfew pass and left at dawn the following day. The sides of the road were adorned with lengthening food queues and crowded refugee huts. Surrounding villages too had been subject to specific firings where one or two shops in the main street had been destroyed. But this paled by comparison with the damage done to Nuwara Eliya, a town whose centre had been incinerated in a single afternoon. As we departed, two days after the attacks, it was still smouldering. □

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SOUTH AFRICA

Bad for business

The IMF is turning against apartheid, Martin Bailey reveals

A SECRET report on South Africa prepared by the International Monetary Fund could lead to a major shift in the financial world's attitude to apartheid. The confidential study, which has been obtained by the *NS*, essentially argues that apartheid makes for bad economics. This is thought to be the first time that the IMF has criticised South Africa for its policy of separate development.

The report, which was discussed at a closed meeting of IMF directors on 20 June, was based on a visit made to Pretoria after the controversial decision to grant $1.1 billion in assistance last November. It is written in the sophisticated language of bank-speak: 'A number of job reservation regulations based on race impeded vertical mobility in the labour market, acted as a disincentive to the acquisition of skills by black workers, and distorted the occupational allocation of labour.' Or, put simply, blacks have been kept in menial jobs and discouraged from learning new skills; the result is a shortage of skilled workers.

The five-page study actually manages to examine South Africa's labour policies without once using the word 'apartheid'. But underneath the bank-speak, the message is clear. The use of migrant labour militates against 'continuity of employment and consequently against on-the-job training'. Despite some improvements, 'on present trends, the discrepancy in distribution of skills is likely to persist over the long run'. South African officials acknowledge that the present system involves some economic costs, but the IMF team did not find 'any clear prospect of improvement in this area'.

In conclusion, the report suggests that 'the regulatory system might serve some sectional economic interests, but in general its maintenance is based on non-economic considerations'. These arguments are now widely accepted both inside and outside South Africa. South African businessman Harry Oppenheimer and some multinational companies operating there have already claimed that they oppose apartheid on economic grounds. But the acceptance of these arguments by the world's most powerful financial institution could mark the end of IMF credits for the South African regime.

The IMF study thinks 'it is essential that the impediments and restrictions governing the labour market be eased and the allocations of government expenditure to certain areas of education and manpower training, that to date have been inadequately funded, be stepped up sharply'. This sentence will inevitably be quoted next time a South African loan request lands on the desks of IMF directors in Washington.

Dr Jim Morrell of the Washington-based Centre for International Policy, a human rights pressure group, now believes that 'critical monitoring of the two chief aspects of apartheid – pass laws and educational discrimination – is likely to become a regular subject of discussion between the IMF and South Africa in their annual consultations'.

When South Africa's $1.1 billion credit was granted last November, it went through only because of the support given by western governments; the request received just 52 per cent of the weighted votes. By the time the IMF directors assembled on 20 June, opposition to South Africa was even fiercer. Tanzania and Zaire, who represent 40 African states, took a stronger stand than previous African delegations. Indonesia, which had not been represented last year, spoke against South Africa on behalf of nine Asian nations. The Scandinavian director, who had abstained last November, criticised labour market constraints in South Africa.

Even the western powers are now willing to acknowledge the negative economic impact of apartheid. By confining the debate to economic issues, however, the US and its allies hope they can deal with the South African question without 'politicising' the Fund. □

WEST GERMANY

Unlikely martyr

Martin Griffin on a police officer's fall from grace

West Berlin

FOR A POLICEMAN to take part in a protest march is a threat to democracy. Or so the West Berlin authorities appear to think, judging by how they dealt recently with the case of Winfried Bruder.

Bruder was one of the small number of Police Directors who work in the West Berlin Interior Ministry; his department was concerned with general strategic planning, and someone of Bruder's rank would have access to a considerable amount of sensitive information. On the face of it, Bruder seems an unlikely target for the witch-hunt that his action provoked: a career police administrator in his forties; clean record; member of the SPD (not unusual in a city which had SPD led governments from 1946 to 1981). The only chink in the armour of respectability, in fact, is that Bruder's son was a squatter – a family problem shared by the Police-President Huebner, who has also found himself at times in the firing line of the hate campaign against squatters, fuelled mainly by the newspapers owned by the ultra-conservative Axel Springer. The squatting conflicts in West Berlin were rather more politically charged than the British variety, and were of some importance in the 1981 Senate elections which brought the CDU to power.

In June this year there were mass clearances of houses where squatters were on the point of signing legal contracts with the owners. Bruder's son was among those evicted. The demonstration on 2 July in which the unfortunate Bruder took part was in protest at the Senate's policy of evicting squatters; it was attended by about 5,000 people and passed off without incident.

The consequences of this brief moment of political activism (or of paternal solidarity) began to explode around Bruder some days later. First into the attack was the President of the West Berlin section of the DGB (the West German TUC), who declared Bruder to be a 'security risk'; there was a chorus of demands for Bruder's resignation and much play was made of the fact that he was privy to high-level discussions about police tactics. One Springer paper covered its entire front page with a photo of Bruder suspiciously frying sausages in his back garden, with the lynch-mob headline 'That's Him!'

Bruder was moved to another position within the Interior Ministry and then out of the security apparatus completely; he works at present in a department dealing mainly with pensions for the disabled. He is appealing against this and the case should have its first hearing shortly. At the time of his removal, Bruder was presented with a document which, among other justifications, claimed that the Allies had insisted that he should no longer have access to classified security material. They, however, have either refused to discuss the matter or have denied any involvement.

Meanwhile, a number of public service unions had begun to make noises about how Bruder had been treated, in particular the way in which exercising his right as a citizen to demonstrate had been portrayed as almost an act of subversion. The 'security risk' remark was sharply criticised. Predictably, expressions of support for Bruder from colleagues unleashed further demagoguery from the House of Springer.

Bruder's own party, the SPD, has been unwilling to be drawn on the issue. Because of their long years in government in West Berlin they are deeply embedded in the city's administrative hierarchy, and the first rule which all SPD careerists learn is that 'security' matters are the concern of the Allies and best left well alone.

And the Allies themselves? Whether or not their name was taken in vain, in order to silence any criticism of Bruder's forcible transfer, it is hardly conceivable that they did not take note of the case. The 'hot Autumn' of Pershing 2 and mass demonstrations is approaching and this will inevitably put German political loyalties under immense strain. If there are more Bruders waiting to emerge, they might ultimately be more significant than any number of protests, marches and blockades. □

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TURKEY

Feeding dissent

Nicholas Bell on a huge but unpublicised hunger strike

FOR OVER a month now, 2,500 political prisoners have been on hunger strike in at least seven Turkish prisons, principally in Istanbul and Ankara. They include some of the best-known figures of the trade union and political opposition, illegal since the 1980 putsch, such as Abdullah Basturk, the President of the DISK trade union federation. This vast and tragic drama has potentially very great consequences for Turkey and its repressed opposition; yet it has been all but ignored by the western media.

The hunger strike is a sign of the desperation of Turkey's political prisoners, most of whom have been in jail for over two and a half years without trial, have been repeatedly and severely tortured and have recently seen their last 'privileges' taken away: no visits by relatives or access to lawyers, no right to defend themselves, cancellations of exercise periods, blanking out of windows. They were finally driven to their hunger strike by the transferral of 100 prisoners to isolation cells in the newly-built high security wings. In these new cells there is barely any daylight (and no electricity). Sewage drains flow through the cells. Each prisoner is obliged to wear a card showing his name, his photograph, the description 'terrorist' and a note of how many years' imprisonment the prosecution is demanding for him. These are all prisoners who have not been tried or condemned. The cells are part of a huge prison building programme intended to create 38 new prisons by the end of this year, with a capacity of 100,000 inmates.

Information from Turkey on the strike is confused. However, from various sources, and in particular from a delegation sent by CEDRI (the European Committee for the Defence of Refugees and Immigrants) to observe the mass trial of the mayor and citizens of Fatsa, we do know that at least two strikers have died and up to 40 are in comas.

When prisoners' families have tried to intervene or gather information, they have often been arrested themselves. One family member explained that it is becoming more and more dangerous to show oneself as a relative: 'They shout at us, accusing us of being "parents who brought dogs into the world". They detained me for 15 days without giving a reason and tortured me by beating the soles of my feet. But this is nothing compared with what my son must endure.'

Censorship in Turkey is total, and few people are aware of the strike. At the beginning, with the foreign media silent as well, it seemed that the Turkish junta was only too happy to let its opponents die 'of their own will'. Over the last few days, however, the news has spread that the hunger strike has stopped, and the Turkish authorities would have us believe that all is well again. But several Turkish sources report that in fact the strike has 'stopped' because army and police officers recently entered the striking prisoners' cells and forced them to eat, using brute force and injections.

A report in *Le Monde* this week confirmed that force had been used to stop the strike at Metris jail, where families of strikers had 'heard loud cries and screams coming from the prison'. Perhaps the international protest – from the Austrian Socialist party, the British Council of Churches and the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe – had led the Turkish junta to believe that too many deaths would irreparably damage their image.

What is certain is that the hunger strike, whether stopped or not, has shown how far repression has gone in Turkey. The mass-trials and torture continue, a whole generation of young opposition risks elimination, the Kurds in particular face genocide – and yet because Turkey is an ally and friend in NATO and the Council of Europe, and is of very great strategic and economic importance to the West, no one cries scandal.

Gradually, however, a crack is being made in this conspiracy of silence. In the last six weeks, two delegations have been sent by CEDRI to observe the Fatsa trial (759 accused and 268 death penalties requested). The groups included Portuguese and Dutch members of Parliament, an Irish senator, a Spanish city councillor and a Swiss mayor; all came back determined to make known in their own countries what they had seen in Turkey. A third delegation, which leaves in September, will probably include a British city councillor; CEDRI has appealed to all local councils for their support.

The next few months will be critical for Turkey. In October the Human Rights Commission of the Council of Europe will begin examining the five-nation complaint lodged against Turkey (made by France, Holland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark). In November the Turkish authorities plan to hold their so-called elections and thereby legalise state fascism. There is a strong danger that a large part of the western media will once again talk of demoracy – Turkish-style, to be sure, and therefore different from elsewhere, but democracy nevertheless. □

Further information, including reports of the Fatsa delegations, can be obtained from CEDRI, Missionstrasse 35, CH-4055 Basel, Switzerland.

UNITED STATES

Waking dream

Elaine Koerner previews a Washington protest

TWENTY YEARS ago this month, Dr Martin Luther King stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and made his now legendary 'I have a dream' speech. To coincide with the anniversary, a group called the New Coalition of Conscience has organised a March on Washington for Jobs, Peace and Freedom, which will take place on 27-28 August.

'We still have a dream' is the motto of the new march, whose organisers include the Reverend Jesse Jackson, Clyde Bellecourt of the American Indian Movement, William Winpisinger of the AFL-CIO, and entertainer Harry Belafonte. Stevie Wonder, Coretta Scott King, Judy Goldsmith of the National Organisation of Women and Dr Benjamin Hooks of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People are acting as co-chairpersons.

Hundreds of groups are supporting the event. Perhaps not surprisingly, these include the American Friends Service Committee, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and Clergy and Laity Concerned. Labour is represented by organisations such as the United Auto Workers and the United Steel Workers, while the professional groups taking part include the National Education Association and the National Lawyers' Guild. Less well-known endorsers include the Black Nurses Association, the Anti-Klan Network, and the Ancient Egyptian Order Nobles Mystic Shrine.

The march occurs half-way through the first session of the 98th Congress, and the organisers intend that it will help to shape the legislative agenda during the rest of the session and beyond. But with President Reagan in the White House, it will not be easy. As the *Washington Post* asked, can the march be anything more than a frustration-building trip down memory lane?

Donna Brazile, one of the march's organisers, thinks that the answer is yes: 'Although we don't expect a great deal of initial response from the present administration, the Coalition will continue to work to ensure state and local commitments to fight for our demands.'

Nearly 250,000 supporters turned out for the 1963 march, and the promoters of this month's event are aiming to reach at least that number. But Ms Brazile emphasises that the march is not about numbers: 'It is about unity of purpose to change the present administration's policies.' Walter Fauntroy, Congressman for the District of Columbia, shares her view: 'The time has come for these groups, who share common goals, to join together to become a powerful political force.' Eyes will turn to the Lincoln Memorial later this month to gauge just how powerful that force could become. □

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BRETECHER

TWO SEATER

what have you bought now?
isn't it obvious?
they delivered it this morning... what do you think of it?
it looks like a beached whale
what made you get it in white... and it's uncomfortable to sit on
not white... eggshell... and anyway you never sit, you slouch
it's uncomfortable to slouch in
next time buy it yourself!
I didn't want it... I don't give a damn about it anyway... the old one was fine
it was disgusting... you spilled wine all over it
yes... but I told you to put salt on it
you could have done it yourself
there's not a drop of scotch around, is there?
get it yourself
look, I've got nothing against buying a sofa... it's just that it's white and uncomfortable
it's the last time I ever get anything for this dump
well, we can probably change it for something else
ring them up then
what's the number?
wait...
put pepper on it
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

Labour's thinking Left

Jim Moher, Wembley

I must comment on your report from the Labour Coordinating Committee's Manchester Conference (*NS* 29 July)

It is most welcome to see that the LCC, as well as other sections of the Party, is at last beginning to think in less dogmatic terms and to recognise that reality of modern working life is again to be the basis of such thoughts. Perhaps some serious *dialogue* will return to Party deliberations.

Such conferences are no doubt valuable to enable LCC members and supporters to be born again (again!). But some of us on the Left, who have been trying to think *and* exercise political judgement for some time in Party affairs, will require more than a few conferences or even pamphlets to convince us that the reborn LCC is 'Labour's Thinking Left'.

In the old days (circa 1981-2), to question some of the dafter thinking emanating from LCC in the Party discussions was to be categorised a 'rightwinger' (or, worse, 'soft left') and dismissed with a sneer. Little did we know then that, beneath many a glib LCC model resolutioner, there was a thinking 'heretic' trying to get out only afraid of being denounced.

Undoubtedly, many of the comrades concerned will, in time, make useful contributions to the ideas of a modernised Labour Party. But that day will come sooner if commentators eager to publicise this trend do not flatter them too much by suggesting that their latest thoughts were what we were all waiting for.

Deputy Dawg

Phillip Whitehead, London NW5

We all know that the Deputy Leadership of the Labour Party was invented as a wheeze to get Herbert Morrison on to the National Executive, but things come to be what they are seen to be, and it is a deadly serious business now. Labour's chances of avoiding third party status at the next election depend on the breadth of our appeal. Michael Meacher's preposterous claim that the party was somehow held back because Wilson and Brown, or Callaghan and Foot, did not agree on every particular of policy has to be shown for the nonsense it is. So does the case that Michael would be a nice quiet Deputy Dawg figure in a united left leadership, under Neil Kinnock.

Anyone who believes that should ask themselves two questions. First, would Labour have done *better* if Tony Benn (whose surrogate Michael now is) had succeeded in his disastrous campaign for the deputy leadership? Would a Foot/Benn ticket have been the 'Centre Left' dreamboat we are now invited to ride? A Kinnock/Meacher ticket simply prolongs those problems for a whole generation – not just problems of style and content, but of the whole notion of which nation we are addressing. Second, in the extraordinary attacks mounted on Neil Kinnock at the last two Tribune rallies by the sectarian Left and the ignoramus 'Who's Hobsbawm?' brigade, did we hear any word from Michael Meacher that maybe Kinnock had a point? Would we next time? Those of us who doubt it think Michael's role as Deputy Leader would be to hold Tony Benn's coat, not Neil Kinnock's.

A Kinnock/Hattersley leadership depends on many things, not least Roy's wholehearted desire to serve and not to sulk in his tent. Maybe it's time we thought what *they* have in common: passionate belief in equality and the ability to articulate it in the idiom of the people, not that of a clique of guilty public schoolboys; a willingness to put behind them some of the bitter quarrels of the older generation; a sense of the possible and a passion for the desirable. Labour has a long march ahead of it to come back from the wilderness. A leadership constantly committed to looking over its left shoulder at the Bennites, immersed in the ever-interesting, ever-destructive party faction fight, would not be able to do it. When are we going to realise that we have retained the characteristics of a broad movement, and cannot subside into a sect?

Greenham goes marching on

Marjorie Fraser, Llandrindod Wells, Powys

I have only just read Chris Harman's letter (*NS* 29 July) and his final remark about the failure of the Peace Movement and the Greenham Common Women's descent into 'sheer mysticism' made me very angry. Had he been, as I was, on one of the 20 or more Peace Marches culminating at Greenham yesterday, he would have seen courage and endurance beyond belief – thousands of people, in the hottest summer of the century, plodding on through melting tarmac and roaring traffic and singing as they went.

He would have seen the almost superhuman efforts made by small Peace Groups all along the way (in our case, from Brecon to Hereford to Cheltenham and over the Cotswolds and the Lambourne Downs) to offer food and accommodation to an unknown number of people arriving at unpredictable times.

Finally (had he survived as far as Greenham) he would have seen thousands of these same tired people, many of whom had been on the march for three months, once again place little candle-lit paper boats of remembrance for Hiroshima on the quiet river. Even the raucous voices of the people of Newbury were hushed.

The Peace Movement and the Greenham Common ideals are *not* in decline – only the media coverage.

Not just an English vice

Ellen Barker, London N1

Your leader 'A child is being beaten' (*NS* 5 August) borrowed its title from Freud, but its content seemed more indebted to the barrack-room lawyers and armchair psychiatrists of the noisy pressure group mentioned in its first paragraph.

You counsel the UK government on the premise that 'the European Court of Human Rights is bound to declare (school caning) illegal in a year or two anyway', but the Court is hardly *bound* to conclude that the 1950 Convention's Article 3 prohibition of 'torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment' – a provision conceived in the shadow of Nazi concentration camps – extends to a few whacks on a naughty pupil's backside. Like Asquith, we must wait and see – and for more than 'a year of two'. In the *Campbell and Cosans* litigation which led to the government consultation paper, which in turn prompted your leader, some five years separated the Strasbourg Court's judgement from the Commission's initial procedural admissibility decision: apart from one case already settled 'out of court' (presumably because the litigant was not confident of the Article 3 issue) the Commission has yet to declare admissible any complaint involving actual school caning.

Your gibes about *le vice anglais* are incongruously derived from the nation whose aristocracy christened sadism. Your blurb for Ian Gibson's 'remarkable book' *The English Vice* (remarkable, at least, in that its modern linguist author apparently addressed himself to an essentially medical subject without a vestige of professional qualification therein) omitted to mention that much of its 'evidence' comprised a scissors-and-paste job on the more arcane psychiatric writings of the nation whose baronage christened masochism, and whose prisons (read, e.g., Dickens's *All The Year Round*) retained and commonly practised the disciplinary birching of grown women decades after the despised UK (in Acts of 1817 and 1820) had abolished all penal corporal punishment of females.

You finally suggest we follow the neurotic society of Sweden in a statutory abolition of spanking *in foro domestico*. How will *that* commend itself in France (including Strasbourg), where *le martinet* – a species of miniature 'cat' generically similar to but rather more formidable than the Scots tawse – remains a nearly-universal article of domestic furniture more than 100 years after 'flogging' (you adopt, of course, the STOPP nomenclature) was abolished by government decree in a state education system whose authoritarianism and centralisation is doubtless as offensive to you as it would be to 99 per cent of British parents?

Talking peace and freedom

Julian Harber, Chairperson, END Coordinating Committee

Jan Kavan's report on the case of Ladislav Lis (*NS* 22 July) is an important reminder of the dialogue which has grown up between Charter 77 and the western peace movements, and of the consequences inside Czechoslovakia for a leading Chartist who has been instrumental in starting it.

On 21 July, Lis was tried and sentenced in one day, found guilty of 'incitement against the republic' by the 'distribution of hostile documents' and sentenced to 14 months' imprisonment followed by three years' 'protective surveillance', which means virtual house arrest. There is still a chance that protests from the western peace movement may help Lis, as his appeal against the verdict should be heard in two to three months' time. I hope that individuals and groups within the British peace movement will make their views known to the Czech ambassador. Lis is in poor health; it is believed that he was coughing blood during the trial, and his lawyer's request for a suspension of his sentence pending medical treatment was refused.

Jan Kavan is right to draw attention to Charter 77's positive position on the western peace movement; CND's observers at the Prague Assembly held fruitful discussions with Chartists while in Prague (see August issue of CND's magazine *Sanity*). This is something which some parts of the British press have been slow to report fully; *The Times* printed an editorial in the week of Lis's trial which called on the peace movement to protest at his treatment, but did not print a letter from END which did exactly that, and was submitted in the same week.

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A Death in an Occupied City

by
Robert McCrum

NOT EVERYONE knows, said Misha, that Shirley Temple was among the foreigners caught in the city by the Rusáci. At the end of a day 'eavesdropping on history', as she put it, and during which she flushed her souvenir photograph of Dubček down the lavatory in the Hotel Alcron, the former child-star was evacuated to West Germany in a convoy organised by the US Embassy. Later, on her arrival in San Francisco, she announced at a televised press-conference that 'The Soviets are machine-gunning all over Czechoslovakia. They're doing it without provocation in many cases.'

For those who could not take the train from Smíchov, Misha remarked, the arrival of the Rusáci had a different meaning.

It all began in the early hours of Wednesday morning, he continued, speaking in his strange, private babel, English, French and Czech hammered into a language currency of his own minting. That was when the first troops arrived.

All over Prague people heard the transport planes throbbing in the summer darkness and, though many refused to believe the news when they heard it, they knew that something unusual was going on. He himself had been feeling very much under the weather and was sitting alone in his flat drinking whisky to kill his head. He smiled self-consciously; yes, he'd slept through the first hours of the invasion *comme un soûlard*.

The next thing he remembered was the phone ringing; a friend with the news. 'We have been occupied by Russian and East German troops.' It was early, about five thirty. He switched on Radio Prague. Solemn music and appeals to the people to stay calm. *Don't try to fight. Stay calm.*

At about seven o'clock there was a furious banging on his door. It was Milena. She had been up most of the night and had come straight to his apartment from the first demonstrations to rouse him. Now she switched on the TV. Chaos there too: newscasters in open shirts, harassed and unshaven. More appeals for calm, a picture of Svoboda, then an announcement: *Harold Wilson has returned from his holidays*. They both had a good laugh at this, he said; shortly afterwards the TV went off the air. Now they could hear real shooting. So it was true.

●

Outside a few trams were running, packed with passengers. So much seemed so normal. Queues were forming outside the bread shops. The elderly were anxious that the occupation should not disrupt their lives. The war had taught them that when the enemy comes you are likely to starve.

Soon he and Milena had reached Old Town Square. No, *il se fiche de la politique*, but he had to admit that the atmosphere was exciting. Milena especially was exhilarated – that was the only word for it.

Talk, milling crowds, and chanting: Dubček, Dubček, Dubček. Some boys had draped a flag over the statue of Jan Hus. It was like before a big match. All the streets were sealed off by tanks. People were talking to the crews. Why did you come, Ivan? Go home, we don't want you. There were some clenched fists among the crowd. As the city woke up, the tension began to grow. Shortly after they arrived at Old Town Square there was more shooting, this time from the direction of Hradčany.

When you got close to the troops you could see they were only *bleus*, trying to act big. Yes, they were probably shit-scared. Most of the people who died were innocent victims. A burst of flame from a trolley wire and the Rusáci opened fire in a panic. Five dead in a street-car. Is that what they call Fate? You see, for most people the invasion was not dangerous.

Everyone seemed to know that Dubček and the others had been seized. At midday, there was a two minute standstill in protest. After the ebb and flow of the crowds, the chanting, the gunfire and the noise of sirens, the silence was extraordinarily peaceful, like a prayer. His cold was getting worse and his ears were blocked: everything seemed doubly remote.

He couldn't recall exactly what happened after that, except that later in the afternoon when he told her he was going home, Milena was amazed, almost furious. He tried to explain that he was not feeling well; after all, it was only politics. For her it was the moment of a lifetime. You are here in Prague when they trample on our freedom, she was saying, and you take your cold off to bed like a bourgeois! Well, he was sorry, but that was how he was made. Even now he seemed embarrassed to have been so short of anger and passion.

Milena certainly wasn't going to rest. She was already making plans to print leaflets and posters. It frightened him, he said, to see how she had fallen in love with the event. But that was true of so many. For a week or two, everyone played truant from their ordinary lives.

●

What was Prague like? Well, he could recall certain images. Broken glass everywhere for one thing. On the pavements, on the road, crunching under every footsep. He didn't know that broken windows could make so much glass. It was like after a big car smash, *un carambolage*.

That night, the Rusáci sent up flares to light up the action. War can be very beautiful, he was afraid to say. He sat alone in his apartment, feeling terrible, drinking whisky, and listening to the radio which *par miracle* was managing to keep up an independent broadcast.

He must have got a bit pissed on his own because he woke up in his clothes on the floor. Milena was outside, shouting to be let in. She came through the door, slightly out of breath, almost joyful with her adventures. She had been up all night again, plotting and drinking. She was now desperately tired and a bit wild. After another argument about his cop-out, he persuaded her to rest for a while, and for a few hours she slept.

Et maintenant? Occupation isn't all drama. Some things stand out in your memory. The thing that came back to him now was Milena, flushed and crumpled with sleep, standing in the doorway of his bedroom wearing only a pair of black knickers. She wanted to take a shower. Where would she find a towel? Now Misha looked awkwardly across the table. She had a perfect body, he said.

'Yes,' said Christopher Iles. He felt his eyes brighten with emotion; looking away, he let Misha continue.

After her shower, she borrowed one of his shirts, tucking it into the belt of her jeans. One of his shirts. Even now, after all these years, there was a hint of sexual pride in his expression.

At midday horns and sirens sounded again, and for an hour the streets were empty. At one, the protest stopped. They joined the crowds outside again. For the rest of that day, he said, all he could remember was walking through Prague.

The streets had become an extraordinary sight. There were tanks or armoured cars at all the junctions. The walls of every building had become scarred with posters and graffiti. MOSCOW – 2000 KM. LENIN AWAKE! BREZHNEV HAS GONE MAD! DUBČEK! DUBČEK! EVEN HITLER CAME BY DAYLIGHT. IVAN GO HOME! If there was a hammer and sickle it was painted like a swastika. Remember, he explained to Iles, we were shocked. This was the army that had liberated us from the Nazis.

Here and there, piles of flowers, wreaths and posies marked where someone had been shot down.

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Moscow

Julian Rothenstein

As they walked, Milena talked politics, abusing the Rusáci. They were still holding Dubček and the rest of the government. No one knew what had happened to them. The people should demand the release of their leaders. Now was the time to stand up and be counted. Why didn't he do something about it? He was sorry, but he was beginning to find her a bit of a bore.

Everyone was coming together in Wenceslas Square. Dubček, Dubček, Dubček. More reports came in: there would be a big demonstration later in the afternoon. For all the anticipation, the atmosphere was surprisingly peaceful.

His first bad moment came when he realised that they had ringed the square with tanks. That was the only time *qu'il eût vraiment la trouille. Pas d'issue.* Up by the Museum, which had been badly knocked about by gunfire, the tanks formed a perfect wall, gun-barrels pointing into the huge crowd. Yes, it was a Winter Palace kind of feeling. Occasionally, one of the tank-turrets would swivel round like a, well, like a Dalek, as if looking for a target. The faces of the commanders were hard and unemotional. It was strange to be standing so close to the enemy you could see the stubble on their chins. If you touched the side of the tank, you would burn your hand. It was the heat of the engines, Misha remarked, that made you realise the enemy was not, how should he say, some *fantasme*.

The tension in the square grew. The demonstration was planned for five. Milena was saying that at last there would be a real confrontation. Yes, he was scared. Everyone was scared.

But nothing happened. That was typical of those days. At five o'clock the crowd began to break up. The tension went down. In a few minutes the place was empty.

That night Milena stayed in his apartment. The curfew made it impossible for her to go home. Apparently, she spent the whole night making posters, listening to the radio as she worked.

What else could he remember now? Milena left before he was up next morning. His cold was better and he felt less lethargic. He spent the day listening to Procul Harum and Jimi Hendrix – you know how you sometimes associate music and events, he said. Occasionally, he tuned in to the radio for news. *There is hope again. Keep listening to the radio and stay calm. It is our only weapon.*

When Milena returned in the evening she was struggling with a wrought-iron street sign, freshly torn from the wall a few blocks away. This was the latest protest. Overnight, Prague became an anonymous city without names or places. All forms of identification were torn down in a great collective act of disfigurement. Oh yes, she was jubilant. Now the Rusáci would be totally lost. The soldiers were already losing their nerve, she said. She had talked to them. They knew what they were doing was wrong. There was a report of a young trooper who'd committed suicide. It was only a matter of time, she said; oh yes, time was on their side.

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On Saturday morning, they were on the street again. Despite the extraordinary calm, there was fear in the street. You looked over your shoulder whenever you heard someone behind you. Quite soon you learned to distinguish the sound of a Russian jeep from a Czech truck. If you were a sensible, law-abiding citizen, you learnt *le système D.*

Milena was not like that. Crossing the Palacky Bridge, they passed close to one of the tanks. Suddenly, to his horror, Milena started to argue with the tank-crew. Why have you come? What do you want? The officer tried to reply reasonably. He was wearing glasses, Misha recalled; perhaps he was a university kid doing his national service. We were sent, he says. Your government invited us. That was not the government of the people, Milena replied, that was only a handful of traitors like Indra.

There was a heap of flowers nearby. This is what you have done, she went on, pointing to the place. You have blood on your conscience, she said. One of the soldiers sitting on the tank pointed his automatic at her, and waved her on with a jerk of his barrel. Misha said he started in terror as she defied him. Would he dare shoot another innocent bystander?

At this point, Misha said, he simply grabbed her and pulled her away. In the next street they had this *grosse bagarre*. She accused him of being a *collaborateur* and slapped him across the face. Then she ran away, leaving him stunned and frightened.

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On the Sunday morning, the first week-end of the occupation, the sun shone for the first time in days. Life and colour returned to the woods behind the Castle, the river sparkled and the buildings of Prague were once again gilded with light. People came out of their houses as if enjoying a visit to the city for the first time, seeing things anew and turning their faces to the sun. It was nature's ceasefire, he observed.

In Jungmann Square there was a student surrounded by a group of eager spectators. The young man was reading the news. He recognised him as a friend of Milena's. When the reading was over, he came over to introduce himself and asked where Milena Hamplová might be. The student didn't know. He was sorry he couldn't be more help. Soon they were talking *comme de vieux copains*. Yes, he observed bitterly, it took the Rusáci to bring people together.

So they began to walk, discussing the events and worrying about Milena's behaviour. They say she does not care, the student said. They say she has left her lover in England and does not think about her safety.

Yes, said Misha, pausing for Iles to take in what he had said, that was what he told me.

Iles asked what happened next. He could not help himself.

Misha flinched and looked over his shoulder as if afraid to be overheard. It was a simple, tragic story. Even now the sense of waste haunted him every day.

Monday morning began with a huge protest, *une cacophonie insupportable*. Sirens, car-horns, and the heavy tolling of church bells. Everyone, *tout le monde* was protesting. It was lucky, he reckoned, that Dubček and the rest reached their agreement in the Kremlin that day. Much longer and there would have been an explosion.

The news came through later that day. The moment he heard the familiar voice at his door, he knew something was wrong. It was the student newsreader with the late special, he said sadly. He had just come from the hospital.

Milena had been walking home. Eye-witnesses said she was alone. A boy of fifteen was painting a slogan on the wall: RUSACI GO . . . There was an armoured car passing by. It stopped of course. A soldier pointed his machine-gun at the boy, who bravely finished his work. HOME, he wrote. Ragged white letters dripping on a stone wall. He did not run, he did not even move. Perhaps he was paralysed with fear. There was some confused shouting from the armoured car, threats and commands, he supposed. Apparently, Milena had calmly walked over and stood next to the boy. You cannot shoot us both, she said. I am innocent.

The machine-gunner cut them down with a single burst. The boy was critically wounded. Milena was killed instantly. □

This is an edited extract from a novel-in-progress which will be published by Hamish Hamilton in 1984.

SOCIETY
Kathy O'Shaughnessy

Twin souls

Romantic Love and Society: Its Place in the Modern World
JACQUELINE SARSBY *Pelican* £2.95

An academic title, you might say; but oh dear, what a cover. Pelican have done their best to prejudice the reader against this sociological study of love. Pink, with little photographs of teenagers all identically in love, or in this case *lurv*, it could be one of those Mills & Boon books, a bit embarrassing. The cover is, however, misleading; for Ms Sarsby proposes to do the opposite. She attempts to look at women's magazine fiction with a cool scrutiny (or rather a deconstructive glare); to strip away the tinsel and stars from the 'boss-secretary' affair; in fact to look without a rosy lens at love, and the institution of marriage as experienced and represented in Western society over the last 700 years. She examines love as a social force, not merely an individual event.

It's a brave idea, and destined to meet with a suspicious reception. The famously non-rational phenomenon etc., love seems of all things most ill-suited to academic analysis. A clinical approach (behaviouristic/sociological) seems at odds with such a subject, highly incongruous. I can imagine people eyeing this book with a certain amount of indignation. For forging blithely ahead, Ms Sarsby deserves applause.

But not too much applause because, after all, the prose turns out to be rather like the cover: 'Love is seen as the bolt from the blue against which one cannot struggle, the preordained meeting of twin souls . . .' The author has a fondness for cliché which she cannot curb, and her rhetoric tends to gather an unfortunate momentum of its own. As no other topic in the world is so thoroughly cliché-ridden, she has a rich unending variety to choose from. A pity, because an academic thesis on love would especially benefit from a clean prose style.

Jacqueline Sarsby has taken on a truly gigantic subject, which needs to be grappled with clearly from certain well-defined specific angles. Yet her methodology remains fragmentary and blurred: bits of feminism, bits of questionnaire, bits of literary analysis, bits of history and sociology. The stylistic shortcomings are a part of the book's intellectual shortcomings – its confusion, its incessant tendency to simplify. Ideas are presented in dramatically florid language, and the hackneyed terminology engenders relentlessly hackneyed thought. The author fires a series of impassioned rhetorical questions at the reader: 'What is intimacy – is it physical or intellectual?' To which one longs to reply – are we talking about relationships or semantics? And why must 'intimacy' be one *or* the other? She continues:

> Is love a mystification for what is a rather dull and predictable choice for a practical economic partnership, or is it the highest form of mental union which, if only briefly, human beings may hope to attain?

Again, must one define love as either of these?

To do her justice, though, *Romantic Love* does scan a wide range of topics. She examines the institution of marriage through the centuries, beginning with Chaucerian times, and questions the notion that romantic love was only an extra-marital phenomenon in the days of fixedly conventional Courtly Love. She argues against the prevalent idea that love within marriage only began to happen in the late 18th century. But she substantiates her findings with a haphazard mixture of document and fiction, two quite different kinds of sources – which could be valuably compared for their difference but, sloppily, aren't.

There are many ways in which this book is unsatisfactory, although interesting, provocative ideas are touched upon. The role played in people's lives by women's magazine fiction, for instance, is potentially fascinating. But again, one doesn't know if these fictions are perceived as merely indicative of the topical state of affairs, or if they are viewed as actively influential structures. At any rate, Ms Sarsby's searching questions are never less than entertaining: 'Is falling in love a rational and even calculating choice, or an engulfing, inexplicable experience?' □

Frank Ormsby

My careful life

My careful life cries: 'No surrender.
Not an inch.' Sometimes I wonder

what stirs the darkness as I pass
the scented gardens of excess,

or pause in the twilight to condemn
the parked cars rocking in the lane.

But still my life cries: 'Work and save.
Rise early. Stay home after five

and pull the curtains. They are blessed
– prudent, abstemious – who resist.

All things in moderation. Share
nothing. Be seemly and austere.'

My careful life sighs: 'Love? Forget it!
Avoid what is sexually transmitted.

The "wasteful virtues", I'm afraid,
earn nothing. They put you in the red.

Samaritans get mugged. Be wise.
Pass watchfully on the other side.

Your youth was stainless. Now your joy'll
be the middle years full of self-denial,

and an old age as ripe and warm
as is commensurate with decorum.'

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PAPERBACKS
Alan Brien

Pop-up images

WHATEVER else it might be, Edmund White's best-selling novel, **A Boy's Own Story,** seems unlikely to be mistaken for a *Boy's Own* story. Arriving here, straight into paperback (Picador £2.50), striped with tributes, among them the claim to be a cross between *The Catcher in the Rye* and *De Profundis*, it is the first-person autobiography of a shy, bright, rich kid who reveres, fancies and manipulates men while refusing to see himself as a homosexual.

Nameless as the heroine of *Rebecca*, our hero slides around in time, returning after each outing to the vantage point of a cockily amoral 15-year-old, at once emotionally retarded and intellectually precocious. Afraid he is type-cast as a banal, ugly caterpillar, he struggles through a succession of awkward and often comical chrysalises before emerging as a kind of poisonous moth, corrupted and corrupting, a prey which attracts then destroys its myopic predators.

Even the style is contagious, heavy as scent on the page, palpable to your fingers on the page as Braille, not so much Salinger, or even Wilde, as immature Updike. The pop-up images, dense as thickets, too often obstruct the narrative like the epigrams in *Dorian Gray*.

Homosexual love scenes, I confess, usually arouse in me more sympathy than empathy, perhaps because I find the male body so familiar and obvious, lacking in surprise or mystery. But White overcomes this in his erotic interludes, largely by allowing his camouflaged Candide to approach his sex objects with a tentative ruthlessness and exploratory excitement which transcends gender.

In the end, White's novel seems to be not so much about coming out as growing up. The most memorable insights turn out to be the more relaxed, conversational ones – the way in adolescence you star yourself in an endless movie you can act better than you can script, or the impossibility of explaining to your parents that they are 'as uninteresting as the rich in novels about backstairs life . . . large naive personages who ask irrelevant questions and from whom the truth must always be kept.'

Perhaps *A Boy's Own Story* is, after all, not so far from the traditional boarding-school yarn in *Boy's Own* with the unprintable, deleted bits restored. Somewhat surprisingly to British readers, accustomed to picture American youth as promoted overnight from delayed puberty to early adulthood, Tobias Wolff's darkly threatening series of short tales, **Hunters in the Snow** (Picador £2.50), also features a brilliantly sketched dormitory episode of self-deceit and snobbery, 'Smokers', which could have been a dropped chapter from White's novel. It is only one of a dozen chilling moral parables about the disastrous effects of small lies and minor pretensions on those conditioned to rank the good opinion of their fellows and neighbours above their own better instincts.

The best of these can even rank alongside some in the bumper anthology, **The Stories of William Trevor** (King Penguin £4.95), five volumes in one, which taps, and often allows to bleed unstaunched, some of the same veins of feeling – above all, the pervasive fear that other people are full of bottled frustrations and pent-up ambitions just waiting to explode in your face.

Frank Norris's **McTeague** (Penguin £2.95) is a clumsy, powerful, half-forgotten epic of American social realism, which carries on its blurb the irresistible summing up – 'searing portrait of the downfall of a slow-witted dentist and his avaricious wife'. First published in 1899, it contains not only the seeds of Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis but the embryo, in both style and theme, of much of Fitzgerald and Hemingway. McTeague's huge, gilded molar, hanging as professional emblem outside his surgery, later in his days of poverty used as a bed-sitter table, recalls the optician's outsize spectacles in *Gatsby*, while his final flight into the alkali desert, pursued by a pinpoint of dust, is the central image of many a classic Western.

England, Their England (Picador £2.50) celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year, and A. G. MacDonnell's comic fantasy of a vanished island, half travelogue, half revue-sketch, now seems sadly dated. At the time, in critical acclaim and commercial success, he matched Evelyn Waugh. Today, the much anthologised village cricket match between crafty locals and lofty metropolitan literati has been ruined by its own popularity, reading like a parody of itself. The writing is too often sentimental and whimsical, and the adventures of a Scottish nobody among the Sassenach upper-crust rely too often on stereotyped cut-outs and thinly disguised reactionary rancour.

Humour, with its dependence on current fads and fashions, tends to fade as its targets grow dim and change their shapes. Wodehouse is a humorist who is widely believed to be ageless and beyond the erosion of time, though I must say I find him too often predictable, repetitive. But if anyone could persuade me I'm wrong, it would be Benny Green with **P. G. Wodehouse – A Literary Biography** (Oxford £3.95). Green is among those rare enthusiasts, nature's fans, who can persuade you his idol is worth his pedestal without modelling him in marzipan.

The key test is Wodehouse's broadcasts from Berlin during the war. Here the biographer wobbles between proving that Wodehouse was not the self-exile from reality Orwell imagined him to be, citing *The Code of the Woosters* as demonstration that he was an early anti-fascist with his comic portrait of Spode, the Mosley look-alike, and yet explaining his ignorance of the full beastliness of the Nazis as Pickwickian innocence. Either might be true, both cannot. □

NUCLEAR WAR
M. H. Ryle

Keeping on

SIOP: Nuclear War from the Inside
PETER PRINGLE and WILLIAM ARKIN
Sphere £2.95
The Medical Effects of Nuclear War
John Wiley £4.50

Alongside Peter Pringle and William Arkin's informative new book, readers might look at an essay by Henry T. Nash. Nash once worked in Air Targets, in the US Department of Defense, where he helped select Soviet cities for possible nuclear obliteration. His article ('The Bureaucratization of Homicide', reprinted in *Protest and Survive*) gives a sense of ethical perspective on the world of military intelligence, communications and control – the nuclear infrastructure expertly, but too dispassionately, mapped out in SIOP.

SIOP, the West's Single Integrated Operational Plan for waging World War III, shows the expected evolutionary pattern, from primitive deterrence to 'flexible options': there are 40,000 targets in today's Plan. Meanwhile, money and ingenuity have been squandered on failed attempts to solve an insoluble problem. In the missile age, when no US President would have more than a few minutes' warning of attack, how is the fiction of effective political control over SIOP to be preserved? There is something comic, I suppose, about these failures: 'The sum and substance is that the exercise of trying to evacuate the National Command Authority and set up his communications was a nightmare, just a complete disaster'. But the election has further dulled my appetite for such comedy. I confess that I had grown sick of the scenery long before the end of this guided tour of the Pentagon and its world-wide appendages.

One can get sick, too, of the recurrent official pretence that a nuclear war, like a school fire, is the kind of mishap whose effects can be mitigated by practice drills beforehand. Sometime soon we will no doubt get a re-run of the abandoned Hard Rock war-game (with reluctant local authorities coerced, this time, into acquiescence). For the Home Office, whose circular HDC(77)1 is included as an annex to the BMA's report on nuclear war, the holocaust would appear to be above all an occasion of bureaucratic inconvenience: 'it would be undesirable, in a period of crisis, to add to the burden of the Health Service by altering the administrative boundaries . . . Whatever the boundary arrangements, adjustment might well be needed after an attack.' The doctors, whose assessment of strategic and technological innovations underpins their medical analysis, have a more scientific and humane understanding. □

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Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union

SHIRIN AKINER *Routledge* £25

Geidar Aliyev's elevation to membership of the Soviet Politbureau last November was widely noticed abroad. He is an Azerbaijani Muslim – that is, he carries an identifiable Muslim name. But, contrary to popular belief, he was not the first Soviet Muslim to achieve this exalted position. That honour had gone earlier, in 1971, to Dinmukhamed Kinaev.

Now, with two out of the eleven Politbureau members bearing Muslim names, the largest Soviet minority is adequately represented at the highest level of leadership. For Muslims are 17.4 per cent of the Soviet population of 262 million. Four-fifths of them are concentrated in the southern republics of Azerbaijan, Kazhakistan, Kirghizia, Tajikistan, Turkmenia and Uzbekistan. In all of these, except Kazhakistan, they are the majority community.

Yet, as Dr Akiner shows in this meticulously researched survey, Soviet Muslims are not a homogeneous group. For instance, they speak 50 different languages. And despite immense official effort made over the past six decades to popularise Russian, only about a third of Tajiks and a half of Uzbeks have acquired 'fluent command' of that language.

Nonetheless, Muslims have undergone dramatic social and economic change since the Bolshevik Revolution. Within a decade of the revolution, most of the 26,000 mosques and religious schools had been closed, Islamic courts phased out, and polygamy and the veil abolished. Some relaxation came in 1940, when the pre-revolutionary Spiritual Directorates were revived under the Council for Religious Affairs. The directorates have been functioning ever since. In fact, the appointment of young Islamic scholars as chairmen of these institutions over the past few years shows that the authorities are taking the religious affairs of Muslims seriously.

Given the high birth-rate among Soviet Muslims, and its effect on conscription and the industrial labour force of the future, interest in this minority is bound to grow at home and abroad.

Dilip Hiro

The Wealth of Information

TOM STONIER
Methuen £8.95 & £4.95

Are our current economic and social problems, our public anxieties, merely symptoms of transition, or do they run deeper and imply irrevocable breakdown? Tom Stonier is an optimist and while acknowledging darker possibilities is, on the whole, sanguine about the future. Subtitled 'a profile of the post-industrial economy', his book is most eloquent and persuasive in its central chapters, which give a selective résumé of existing technological innovation. Here his thesis that knowledge replaces land, labour and capital as the major factor in the economy is demonstrated by example. What twenty years ago appeared to be peripheral ingenuities are now shown to be feasible alternatives to current methods of creating wealth. The arguments of those uneasy about the new technology, or blind to its implications, are briefly considered. Monetarists, neo-Keynsians, Protectionists etc. cannot escape his contention that economic problems are now largely international and not susceptible to parochial solution. But is he not a little too sanguine? Such assertions as 'our children will live in a world of peace and plenty' and 'war is an institution on the demise', though tempting, do seem to be dangerously euphoric.

His title has been deliberately chosen to echo Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, and the majority of chapters have as their starting point excerpts from his seminal work. Such a tactic, unfortunately, invites comparison. Smith had intended his book to represent only one aspect of a comprehensive system of moral and social philosophy, and the whole work is imbued with a sense of this wider overall aim. *The Wealth of Information*, however, lacks this cultural underpinning and tends rather to concentrate on economic theory and technological potential. When the focus is widened lacunae occur. An assertion such as 'grandmothers were humanity's first information storage and retrieval systems' doesn't quite succeed in grafting the homely onto the grandly theoretical. Anyone looking for an answer to Eliot's questions,

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

is going to be disappointed. Although their effect is largely rhetorical, these questions do highlight the weaknesses of the book. Its strengths are evident in the way it repeatedly faces up to material problems and outlines co-operative solutions. I admire the author's faith in human nature and the altruistic possibilities of technology. I would like to believe him.

John Levett

Empire of Signs

ROLAND BARTHES *Cape* £9.95

In *Empire of Signs*, first published in France in 1970, Roland Barthes has performed the useful service of describing a post-structuralist Utopia, a never-never land where the central tenets of recent French thought are woven into the fabric of everyday life. In this Empire there are no possibilities of conflict between nature and culture of the kind which have haunted the imagination of the West, since all reality is artifice and convention. Nor do human beings risk becoming involved in an endless, tormented quest for meaning, since the Signs of the Empire have no ultimate signification. Equally, there is no sense of a gulf – with its potentially tragic consequences – between the inner world of individual experience and the public domain: people simply are what they – in codified social contexts – do.

The status of the book is complicated, however, by the fact that the Empire in question bears a remarkable resemblance to contemporary Japan. And Barthes – in characteristic fashion – prefers to play upon, rather than to resolve, the ambiguity. He confesses that a visit to Japan did 'afford him a situation of writing', but he stresses that the slim volume thus produced has no claims to being a travelogue 'to analyse reality itself' is, after all, the imperious ambition of Western discourse. Japan, Barthes hints in his introductory remarks, is itself simply a sign label, a pretext for the assembly of an 'unheard-of symbolic system' which would subvert our Occidental preconceptions about nature and language, subjectivity and art.

Accordingly, the book takes the form of a series of rapid vignettes, in which diverse aspects of Japanese culture are subjected to a kind of philosophical scrutiny. And there *is* an undeniable virtuosity in Barthes's transformation of the customs of Japan into so many living embodiments of post-structuralist principles. The elaborately-packaged gift containing some trivial object beneath its many layers becomes a metaphor of the 'flight of the signified' in deconstructionist modes of reading. The *Bunraku* puppet-theatre, with its emphatic separation of speech, manipulation and gesture is taken as dissecting our sentimental notions of spontaneous selfhood and personal identity. Even the geographical disposition of Tokyo – a city, Barthes claims, without a centre – becomes an affront to 'the very movement of Western metaphysics'. Everywhere Barthes discovers what he presents as a delicious vacancy, an intricate, formalised play of 'empty' signs.

It would be absurd, of course, to take this *jeu d'esprit* too seriously. Barthes has some insightful things to say about the haiku, about calligraphy, about Japanese cuisine, but these desultory remarks hardly demonstrate the existence of a culture without inwardness, or prove the futility of a supposedly Western passion for meaning. Barthes was too seasoned an operator not to appreciate that, far from gazing into the Zen-structuralist void, he was simply confronted with a system of feeling and expression which he preferred – for aesthetic reasons – not to be able to interpret. Like other Utopias, the Empire of Signs looks most enticing to those who can only visit.

Peter Dews

A Mania for Sentences

D. J. ENRIGHT *Chatto* £12.50

As a reviewer, D. J. Enright's intention – admirably fulfilled in this collection – is to assist readers by 'describing, drawing out, comparing, concurring or quarrelling with' the works discussed. He censures perceptively and, more difficult, praises well. Nor, as in the case of Max Frisch's *Man in the Holocene*, is he scared to admit perplexity.

These reviews having 'grown or changed slightly' since original publication, Enright now designates them essays. Probably he is seeking the air of permanency that accompanies the term: reviews, especially ones as closely related as Enright's to the books that inspired them, are unlikely to outlive the currency of those books. He need not have worried. Though still unmistakably reviews – the specific far outweighs the general – the pieces mostly concern items of lasting interest; the author has chosen carefully from the extensive material available (his last collection, *Man is an Onion*, appeared back in 1972). The subjects are much as before: German and Oriental literatures predominate, with work on, among others, the Manns, Brecht, Grass, Böll, *The Tale of Genji*, Maxine Hong Kingston . . . This time, though, there is little on poetry; instead, a section is occupied with linguistic matters, from language itself to distinctive stylists (including Burgess and Queneau).

Unlike windier reviewers, Enright has no need to expand his opinions to fill the allotted space. Digressions are rare and well directed, as when a life of Heine prompts wider consideration of the biographer's art, *The Golden Lotus* an aside on differences between Oriental and Occidental pornography. Sometimes, indeed, Enright has more views than fit. Discussing Musil's encyclopaedic *The Man Without Qualities*, he seems to acknowledge that he can merely scratch the surface. In other cases, though, he tries to cram in more pertinence than can comfortably be accommodated, producing reviews that are closer to being catalogues of observations. Fortunately, Enright only exceptionally allows himself to fall victim in this way to his energetic critical faculty.

David Montrose

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JAZZ
Charles Fox

First steppes

Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union
S. FREDERICK STARR *Oxford* £12.50
Con Fuoco
GANELIN TRIO (Leo LR 106)
The Ways of Freedom
SERGEY KURYHOKHIN (Leo LR 107)
Homo Liber
SIBERIAN 4 (Leo LR 114)

'Tahiti Trot', 1926

Some years possess a resonance that others lack. 1917, for instance, vibrates in the memory not merely because it witnessed the October Revolution but for producing the first jazz recording. Important though the latter event was musically, it also demonstrated how technology (radio was about to back up the gramophone) would spread the new popular music, engulfing Europe as well as America. Ragtime had already brought the cakewalk; the foxtrot was everywhere. In St. Petersburg the Yusopov private orchestra even included six saxophones (Prince Felix Yusopov in his memoirs recalls listening to the gramophone playing 'Yankee Doodle Went To Town' just before he poisoned Rasputin). But jazz, as distinct from ragtime, did not penetrate Russia until 1922, when a concert was arranged in Moscow by Valentin Parnakh, a Futurist poet who had lived in Paris, been sketched by Picasso and now embarked on a one-man crusade.

That concert, naturally enough, has a special significance for S. Frederick Starr, although he suggests it was probably better read about than listened to. Starr, an American academic but also a jazz player, deals with matters that nobody has delved into before. In his book the word jazz gets used in its broadest sense, meaning American syncopated popular music in general, not just the hot, improvised playing beloved by purists. But that distinction got smudged early on – in 1926 – by the first pair of American bands to tour the Soviet Union. Both consisted of black musicians, but where Bennie Peyton's Jazz Kings, with Sidney Bechet in their ranks, kindled an intensity that was hard to emulate, Sam Wooding's Chocolate Kiddies offered pseudo-symphonic arrangements, the sort of thing Paul Whiteman specialized in. Not surprisingly, most Russian musicians and bands plumped for imitating the latter.

It did not prevent their being assailed as decadent. Gorky's denunciation of 1928 ('listening for a few moment to these wails one involuntarily imagines an orchestra of sexually driven men conducted by a man-stallion, brandishing a huge genital member') was not dissimilar from the kind of moralizing that had been prevalent on the other side of the Atlantic. But what American vigilantes frequently surmised to be Communistic, Gorky diagnosed as a capitalist assault upon the workers. Up to then jazz formed part of a cosmopolitanism that was tolerated, even encouraged, under the New Economic Plan. When Stalin took over, the Association of Proletarian Musicians soon got busy. Chauvinism, too, was rampant. Jazz needed to be Soviet jazz to stand a chance of acceptance. Sometimes the word got appropriated without the music. The State Jazz Orchestra of the USSR, 43 men strong, founded in 1938, seldom did more to justify its name than including a few foxtrots in its programmes.

That kind of vacillation, that sort of confusion, went on for the next four decades. Was jazz a threat to the Soviet working class or a genuinely popular and international music? Was it the expression of an oppressed race or just sordid commercialism? (Paul Robeson sold the pass in 1949 by declaring that the only true Negro music in America was vocal – spirituals and blues – and that instrumental jazz was a debasement: an odd opinion to come from a man who, only eight years before, had recorded with Count Basie's orchestra.) Unfortunately, quibbling of that sort often had a practical outcome; and being out of favour was not just a matter of losing gigs. Quite a few jazz musicians and fans got caught up in the purges that began in 1937, for no more sinister reason than their having travelled abroad or mixed with visiting foreigners.

Valentin Parnakh was among those arrested (he allegedly died while labouring on the White Sea Canal). Parnakh was, incidentally, one of a sizeable number of Soviet Jews who were linked with the music. Others included the two most famous bandleaders of the 1930s: Alexander Tsfasman (rather like a Russian Bert Ambrose) and Leonid Utesov, later to play a fascinating double-game, presenting a concert of big band swing just after the War, under the pretence of exposing a threat to society. Another was Eddie Rosner, a Polish-born trumpeter who had jammed with Louis Armstrong in Italy in 1934 and been a pen-friend of Gene Krupa. Rosner moved to Lvov when war broke out and was promptly appointed leader of the State Jazz Orchestra of Byelorussia, playing the most out-and-out jazz so far heard from a Soviet group. But such things were easier to accomplish in outlying republics, away from Moscow's prying zealots.

If jazz experienced a boom while Russia was allied to the United States, the Cold War brought a swift rebuff. Saxophones were banned for a time in 1949, just as they had been 20 years earlier; and after Stalin's death and disgrace, Krushchev turned out to be just as grumpy. 'When I hear jazz it's as if I had gas on the stomach', he declared in 1963, just before launching an assault upon those arts that he felt lacked socialist realism. Yet jazz went on surviving through the tenacity of the musicians and the fans, especially those who happened to be officials in the right places. The Baltic republics, notably Estonia, became the setting for the most up-to-date jazz playing in the Soviet Union (musicians not only took over bebop chords, they tried to dress sharply too).

Starr unrolls this narrative with as much objectivity as anyone committed to the

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music can muster. One trusts his facts and opinions because he rarely blunders in those areas that are familiar (three exceptions: the ODJB came to Britain in 1919 not 1918; Juan Tizol, not Duke Ellington, composed 'Caravan'; a Harmon is not the same as a wa-wa mute). The book ends by describing the onslaught of rock in the 1960s, when the Soviet government found itself reliving the traumas of 40 years before.

A couple of years ago the trumpeter Valeri Ponomarev, who emigrated to the United States, visited Britain with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. But in the absence of recordings most of the Russian musicians mentioned in this book are merely names on a page. Recently, however, the London-based Leo label began releasing LPs by some of the many 'free jazz' players who have emerged; the three LPs listed above are typical. The music of the Siberian Four, recorded in Riga, has much in common with the kind of improvising to be heard in New York or Chicago, London or Berlin, with the alto saxophonist, Vladimir Tolkachev, getting a feathery sound like an *avant-garde* Paul Desmond. Sergey Kuryokhin, a solo pianist from Leningrad, is even more impressive. But the best-known ensemble is the trio led by the pianist Vyacheslav Ganelin, including another fine saxophonist, Vladimir Chekasin. They go in for much doubling and trebling of instruments; there is, too, a pleasing jokiness, maybe hinting at a Russian sensibility. More should be revealed next March when the Trio tours Britain on the Arts Council's Contemporary Music Network. It will be the first time a Russian jazz group has performed so far from the homeland, perhaps the most optimistic way of celebrating the onset of 1984. □

MUSIC
Andrew Clements

Showpieces

Carter: Triple Duo
Muldowney: Piano Concerto
Albert Hall/Radio 3

Working through the score of Eliott Carter's **Triple Duo** a couple of months before last Sunday's British première was an exhausting experience. Carter sets his score readers a formidable task, a mental juggling act in which the teeming lines must be kept distinct and precisely aligned. Hearing the *Triple Duo* in a performance as lucid and supple as that of the Fires of London (who introduced it in New York in April and brought it to the Proms) dissolved many of the difficulties and emphasised again how the complexities of Carter's music are essentially a means to an expressive end. The new work is one of his most seamless and texturally attractive.

The machines of the score are revealed in its title. The basic sextet of the Fires is divided into three duos – flute with clarinet, violin with cello, piano with percussion both tuned and untuned. Each pair is allotted its own character and harmonic world and generates its own motion – the woodwind rely on triplets and the intervals of the major and minor third; the strings gravitate towards semiquavers and the perfect fifth; the piano and percussion have quintuplets and fourths. Within that framework Carter allows the character of each instrument to develop as the work progresses. The violin tends to be ever more flamboyant, virtuoso writing, a foretaste perhaps of the concerto that Carter is planning; the clarinet shows a penchant for pawky, fractured melodies, while the flute favours long-limbed expressive lines and so on.

Carter has again created an organic unity that operates according to consistent rules and fantasies; the contrast with the self-conscious awkwardness of the settings of Robert Lowell that preceded it, *In Sleep In Thunder*, is most marked. Where Carter's music chafed against the imperatives of word setting, in the *Triple Duo* it generates its own unquenchable energy. And though the sound world of the work is identifiably that of the Fires' instrumentation, Carter redefines it in his own way. The percussion instruments articulate the progress of the 18 minutes – incisive snare-drum shots to begin and end, tom-toms to initiate the final, irrepressibly athletic tutti, deliquescent bell-sounds (glockenspiel and crotales) to colour the central still meditation, in which delicate melodic lines are spun over chiming chords from strings and piano. This passage is one of the most remarkably effective in Carter's music and the way in which it emerges quite naturally from the busy, scherzo-like textures, to be reabsorbed with equal fluency is as good an example as any of Carter's utter control of his rhythmic procedures. Few works of such range and density cover their structural bones so effortlessly, without any suggestion of superfluous fat. *Triple Duo* is a single movement built from a series of tempi threaded onto the central strand of a single metronomic pulse, and every change of gear is perfectly lubricated.

As well as creating a compositional tour de force Carter has come up with a brilliant showpiece for virtuoso instrumentalists. In its swirling arabesques and extravagant rhetoric, shifting layers of colour and texture, the music delights in physical excitement; the surface of *Triple Duo* glitters as it does in more of his other work, drawing in the wary listener to its less obvious intricacies. Hard to believe that it is the work of a composer who will be 75 in a few months' time.

If *Triple Duo* is easily the most important new work heard at the Proms so far (it came as the climax of a fascinating programme by the Fires of London, which also included a rare performance of Maxwell Davies' devastating *Revelation and Fall*), Dominic Muldowney's **Piano Concerto** was rather more significant than many another Proms première in recent years. As a work of considerable elegance and individuality (for all its historical borrowings), it enters a repertory not exactly replete with works written in the last ten years, while for its composer it signals a command of large-scale organisation quite new.

Muldowney is now 31, a precocious talent who produced an impressive string quartet while a student and followed it with a series of works that owed much to contemporary models – Blake, Birtwistle, Harvey – and later flirted with rock and pop. His fluency has been demonstrated in his work for the National Theatre where he's resident composer; a recent interest in Brecht and Weill suggested yet another outlet for his talents. Now the piano concerto returns his music to the straight and (relatively) narrow; the modernist influences have been purged and Stravinsky reinstated as benign godfather. The ghost of the greatest borrower of all lies over the concerto's sequence of closed forms, an opening group of chorale preludes, fugue, cadenza in the guise of variations, passacaglia and finally the statement of the chorale that is revealed to have underpinned the whole structure. Along the way echoes of three centuries of concerto writing are evoked – from the baroque to Berg, high romanticism to Walton. Yet there is no sense of derivativeness; Muldowney's homages are fresh and clean-cut and not a bit abashed by their cheek. □

THEATRE
Christopher Edwards

Dark ages

Bad Language
DUSTY HUGHES *Hampstead*
You Can't Take It With You
HART and KAUFMAN *Lyttelton*

Dusty Hughes, an arch publicist, says his new play is set in present day Cambridge – a claim guaranteed to attract at least a few column inches, if only from Cambridge contributors pointing out his solecisms, anachronisms, and any other isms they can remember, in the case post-structuralism. In fact this French species of criticism gets no more than a fleeting mention, although the moment Hughes's trendy young English don refers to the Faculty row over Colin McCabe any pretence that this is Cambridge 1983 begins to sound suspect. Still, it wasn't this that made me doubt the character's authenticity. It's simply that Bob Thomas, a Leavisite Lawrentian in jeans and sweatshirt, is too ordinary for words. I harbour this nostalgic belief about Oxbridge English dons, be they never so twisted, sarcastic, sexually ambiguous and creepy (qualities ably conveyed by Alan Rickman – all drawls and insidious smiles), that they demonstrate a subtle intelligence from time to time. This is something Hughes's writing never suggests. Come to think of it, when was the last time an intellectual walked the contemporary stage who wasn't conceived

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purely in terms of his personal relations, one whose speeches convinced you that he might actually possess a mind capable of writing those smart books which make up their credentials?

Bob has formed a little band of second-year undergraduates, children of a period he describes as 'the dullest since the Dark Ages': he's talking about the Sixties and clearly he ought to know. Tim, a junkie who stores LSD in other people's fridges, still pays sentimental homage to that decade, full or not. Then there is beautiful, sad Davina, book thief and don fodder. She falls rather sweetly for Bob, but is no sooner enjoyed than despisèd straight as Bob discovers that this Sixties offspring is bland and has a Lower Second mind. Well, he taught her, so why is he surprised?

Hughes, at one point, has a character refer to the 'post-Falklands' generation. A little early for that, but the post-*Brideshead* wave is still evident in Alastair, Robin Lermitte's neat portrait of undergraduate whimsy – a camp ex-Etonian *wunderkind* director who worries about baldness, *not* being gay, and his utter lack of talent. Lermitte, in his first professional engagement, showed fine comic timing when handling the studiedly off-hand delivery of Alastair's paradoxes.

Against all this earnest indulgence Hughes sets Phil, who I guess ranks as the keeper of the play's conscience. Phil is a North Country scholar exasperated by Varsity frivolity. Back home (everywhere in the country) people are unemployed, but what really upsets him is the thought that his education will alienate him from his working-class family. It turns out that Phil too has had an affair with Bob. Tripos comes and goes, Phil gets his First but, in despair, is driven to commit a subliminal act of mutilation directed against himself, Bob, D. H. Lawrence, life. In a cut to end all education cuts he hacks off the genitals from a corpse in the city morgue and hangs them from the college railings. This succeeds in upstaging even Alastair's disastrous production in the Court, and sends Stan, the randy old college servant, into premature retirement.

Having helped push his pupils to a stage of suicidal despair, Bob then sets about helping them rescue their university careers. The cast is completed by the arrival of Prunella Gee's Suelene, a worldly visiting American professor who seduces Tim between jogging sessions without spoiling her appetite for Bob. What she so admires about Bob (apart of course from his wonderful book) is the way he is so objective about sex. I thought Hughes strained hard, and unsuccessfully, to sound modern, provocative and amusing, but the glimpse he gives us of ugly contemporary *mores* is persuasive. Geoff Rose's set is dead right too, Fifties gas-fires, battered leather sofas, coffee mugs and vacant shelves.

Hart and Kaufman's comedy, which Michael Bogdanov directs at the Lyttleton, is a sort of parable in praise of individuality. The time is 1936, the place is the Sycamore household in New York – a huge rambling set from Grant Hicks which comes over as a combination of museum, menagerie and fireworks factory. Martin Vanderhof, the senior figure in the play, saw the light in 1901 while travelling in a Wall St elevator. His was a mission to unwind, business was a fag because it stopped you pursuing your hobbies; so he came home and relaxed for the next 35 years. Unopened mail from the Internal Revenue gathers ice in the freezer. Meanwhile his example (and his cash) have turned his family into a bunch of zany hobbyists who, with the exception of Alice, do nothing but write plays, paint, make fireworks, learn ballet, play Beethoven on the xylophone and entertain starving Russian emigrés to dinners of cornflakes and candy. Geraldine McEwan is delightfully dotty as the mother-cum-amateur-artist, but I found the battiness of the other characters pretty tiresome. The 'loopy but loveable' formula depends upon the whole family coming across as a performing troupe and, on the first night at least, the pace was too slack.

The crux of the piece is the meeting between the eccentric Sycamores and the stuffy parents of Alice's fiancé Tony Kirby. Geraldine McEwan (again) makes the most of a comically revealing word association game in which Kirby Senior learns some home truths about Wall St and his love life, but the material is pretty thin. I reckon the director admitted as much by his shameless device of a cheap and cheerful musical routine at the end – a ploy perfected by Trevor Nunn. It's not in the text, it's pleasantly distracting, and it sends you out with a smile. □

TELEVISION
Mary Harron

Success

ITV's TWO-PART SERIES **Some You Win** was a very odd thing, a razzle-dazzle variety show with the concept of a documentary. Compèred by Frank Carson and Stan Boardman, it mixed standard cabaret fare – mother-in-law-jokes, a Beatles imitation, sequinned song and dance routines – with real-life interviews and an investigation into Success. At the outset we were told we would meet winners, losers, and the ones that keep trying, but the programme's special venom was reserved for the triers.

My favourite in last week's episode was Jock, an Irishman who may be the world's most unsuccessful gambler. *Some You Win* took him to the races so we could watch him lose. Leering toothily, Stan Boardman asked, 'If you win, do you pocket the money or do you double your stakes until you lose it all?' 'I double my stakes until I lose it all', agreed Jock, as if it was the most natural thing in the world.

Jock says he wakes up happy every morning at the thought that today will be *his* day. An absolute refusal to learn from experience explains both his disastrous record and his enchanting optimism. At every race he feels lucky, and every failure is a shock. As his favourite Santa Lucia was left behind in a cloud of dust we saw his face working to control the pain of disappointment: 'If it was different conditions I think she would have won.' After a series of spectactularly wrong guesses Stan Boardman tried to rub salt in the wounds: 'You've lost £86 today, you must feel *gutted*.' Jock kept his dignity. 'No, tomorrow's another day', he said.

Thanks to the mesmerising power of the camera, TV personalities are allowed to behave in ways that would get them beaten up in ordinary life. I keep hoping that one of the contestants in **Ultraquiz** (ITV) – the mass game show devised by the Japanese as a subtle revenge on the West – will leap forward and grab Jonathan King by the throat. Instead, prodded and gibed at, they move forward passively to their fate. Finally a contestant called Ray, a stolid man in plaid jacket and spectacles, began to glow with murderous hatred. Ray had incurred King's displeasure because he thought Charles Dickens had written a famous 19th-century cook book. King, a Cambridge graduate of such culture and attainment that he is now the master of a quiz show, wouldn't let the joke rest. 'Here comes Mrs Beeton', he smirked every time Ray came into view. I thought I saw Ray make a little lunge towards him, but it was only wishful thinking.

Ultraquiz represents a new refinement in game show cruelty: there are no consolation prizes for the runners-up. Just to be on television, evidently, is considered enough. It is the same premise as in *Some You Win* which humiliated its noble failures on the grounds that if they wanted success that badly, any public attention would do. Playwright Arthur Berry suffered worst. He had some success in the 1930s but, having now written 60 plays, hasn't had one performed since. *Some You Win* gave him a break by dramatising an extract from one of them. It wasn't bad, but the audience – programmed for contempt – snickered all the way through.

I suppose you could call Walter Rauff a success. He was a successful Nazi officer, successfully murdered 200,000 people, and successfully got away with it. In *Colonel Rauff's Refuge,* **World In Action** (ITV) camped outside his home in an affluent suburb of Santiago for a fortnight. Rauff invented the mobile gas chamber, a sealed van (usually disguised as a Red Cross ambulance) which pumped its passengers full of carbon monoxide. Rauff's mentor, Himmler, had asked for a more 'humane' method of execution. More humane for the executioners, that is; the death squads were getting queazy about shooting people *en masse*. Rauff's invention made the slaughter invisible, except for the screams and banging on the walls of the van.

An historian commented drily, 'Rauff seemed to be a man who was constantly seeking to improve his products.' He worried over and fiddled with amendments to his design, until his mobile gas chambers were replaced by the more efficient death

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camps. This excellent documentary left a question in its wake. Rauff was captured by the Allies and spent 20 months in prison before his escape to Chile. We were left wondering if, like Barbie, he had made a deal with Intelligence. A survivor of the holocaust pleaded for justice: 'Barbie was a little murderer, Rauff a big one. He was thirsty for blood, for more and more medals.' At 70, the man who measured Jewish lives in decorations shuffled past the camera crew, calmly unrepentant. □

FILMS
Alan Brien

Mass action

Heaven's Gate
NFT

There is nothing a cinema buff cherishes more than a suppressed masterpiece, an afternoon-long epic butchered by studio bosses, political hatchetmen, or just the critics – Stroheim's *Greed*, Welles's *The Magnificent Ambersons*, Eisenstein's *Que Viva Mexico*. And if the result can also be interpreted as a subversion of establishment values, the uncovering of a shameful blot on the national history, then to deny its greatness becomes one more example of Caliban's rage at seeing his own face in the mirror.

It is an attitude I too find very tempting, and one I wish I could adopt towards Michael Cimino's *Heaven's Gate*, the latest candidate for a place in the pantheon of movies that were martyred. Can the 'first agitprop Western', seen by some as almost fanatically Marxist, pledged to historical fidelity, really be all that bad? Completed in late 1980, *Heaven's Gate* was massively panned in the US, gathered dismissive reviews plus a couple of enthusiastic partisans here, and was vastly admired in Paris. Even at the BFI, among the incorruptible custodians of cinematic integrity, the initial reactions were only tentatively sympathetic. But by December 1981 their Bulletin was on the offensive, reprinting 2,000 words from a scholarly history, Daniel Boorstin's *The Americans*, to prove that Cimino's account of the Johnson County War, the central theme of the picture, had all the facts on its side.

Now, three years later, the NFT, in a break from its usual practice, is giving an uncut edition of *Heaven's Gate* a run of eight performances. And there is growing expectation that those of us who greeted its first, truncated appearance with 'peculiar venom' (*Sight & Sound*) will be forced to eat our words.

Heaven's Gate opens with a prologue at Harvard in 1870. The young bloods, celebrating the coming of age of their country as well as their generation, mark their graduation by marches and orations, dancing and jousting. The Dean (Joseph Cotten) rallies them to the highest ideal, 'the education of a nation'; but wispy, decadent William Irivine (John Hurt, slack mouth already glued to the teat of a silver flask) responds with a frivolous paean to the status quo. His buddy, James Averill (Kris Kristofferson), a muscular college-hero with a face like a prize-fighter's bare knuckles, nods in agreement.

We now cut to Wyoming, some 20 years later, where Averill has oddly opted for a career as frontier marshal, a sharp-shooting idealist, not above bouts of boozing and whoring, but devoted to the protection of the New Americans who are flooding the range – presented as a rabble of cityfied immigrants, squabbling in broken English, travelling huddled on the tops of trains, trailing empty roads lugging suitcases, gunned down by hired killers in the pay of rich absentee cattle barons. Irvine, more explicably, has become a partner in the Stock Growers' Association, feebly objecting between drinks, when they plan in their palatial club to import an army of mercenaries and clear their land of 'thieves and anarchists'.

The contrast between the two – dutiful servant of the law, debased slave of self-interest – is schematic enough, but also paralleled by the relationship of Averill and Nate Champion (Christopher Walken). He is á cold-eyed, half-educated gunman of immigrant stock, who serves first the exploiters and then their victims, rivalling Averill for the love of local bordello madam Ella (Isabelle Huppert), an archetypal French whore, body by Renoir, words by Maupassant.

When the invading troops, uniformed in dustcoats and trilbies, find themselves trapped by the citizen militia of Johnson County, whooping round their defensive laager like the Indians of a hundred Westerns, Cimino makes a climactic centrepiece of a full-scale battle, with casualties mounting at the pace of a day on the Somme. Just as Averill, recalling his Harvard lessons in Roman warfare, is about to wipe out the last survivors with armoured waggons, the US cavalry arrive.

There is no doubt of Cimino's mastery of mass action, whether the waltzes round the Harvard quad, the roller-skating dance in the Heaven's Gate hall, or the bloody fight between the amateurs and the pros. Anything that appears on the screen is dazzingly pictorial, from a weathered face of old washleather to a range of crumpled mountains, from an enormous studio-built town, jammed with crowds and pouring smoke at every orifice, to the light falling in dusty bars across a vacant saloon. The patterns are admittedly impressive, but of a nudging obviousness that grows wearisome – the tendency of all movements to fall into dizzying circles; the counterpoint of stock-owners giving their roll-call of Anglo-Saxon names against the reading out of the death-list, full of Continental gutturals. Above all, everything goes on too long.

The personal relationships, even the personalities on this huge backcloth, remain cryptic and unexplored. It is like being locked in a gallery of Victorian landscapes, or a room papered with *Saturday Evening Post* covers. Like Whistler facing Frith's Derby Day, we wonder whether it can all be done by hand. The Emperor has too many clothes; under all that clobber there seems to be nobody at all.

Cimino, who wrote and directed, might have been better advised to make the whole film fiction. Boorstin's book establishes his cattle barons as realistic, but provides no evidence that their opponents were anything but native-born Americans. Much is made of Cimino's use of real characters, without revealing that where he has kept the names he has changed the biographies. Averill was not an educated Easterner; nor was Ella French. Both were lynched two years before the Johnson County War, an aborted punitive expedition which killed not hundreds but possibly only half a dozen.

The replacement of the cuts in *Heaven's Gate* supplies nothing but extensions of what was there already. To elevate it to the status of one of the cinema's great works seems to me little more than wishful thinking. It ought to be, therefore it is. □

John Coleman is on holiday.

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2783 **Set by C. Fever**

To celebrate the appearance of a new dictionary of euphemisms, let's have a sonnet (of the 14-line type, natch) containing as many familiar or unfamiliar euphemisms as possible. By 26 August, if you please.

No 2780 **Set by Snubbin**

Down-to-earth definitions.

Report **By Len the Unlucky**

Ms de Meaner is having her annual sojourn in Vanuatu. The editor of the *New Statesman* (whose name I didn't catch) is becalmed off Land's End, after another plucky but doomed attempt to win the America's Cup. Mr and Mrs Squiffy have taken their offspring to some typhoid-infested corner of the Med. Left alone in the Complex, I thought I might bump up the prizes this week. No chance. The accountant has taken the company's cheque-book with him on his sun-drenched fortnight in the Cayman Islands, so I'm afraid you'll have to be paid out of petty cash. A quid a quip is the best I can do; plus Luncheon Vouchers, of course.

Cup Final: Watching poor football you could see better on TV, while various people pee in your pockets.
Easter: That spring weekend when people camp out in baggage shanties at Heathrow departure lounge, and are interviewed.

ROY KELLY

August Bank Holiday: Lunch just before Exeter, tea on the Exeter by-pass.

ROB HULL

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Conservative Party Conference: People from Surbiton going to the seaside to have a good clap.
One-Day Test in Australia: Throwing as many beer cans in one day as you used to throw in five.

J. TAPLIN

Christmas Day: An over-stuffed nation half-watching *The Sound of Music* for religious reasons.
Burns Night Supper: Poetry-haters getting pissed on Scotch after pretending to enjoy haggis and the bagpipes.
Royal Garden Party: A load of nobodies in hired suits from Moss Bros queueing for tea in a marquee.

E. O. PARROTT

St Valentine's Day: Spotty adolescents waiting for the second post.
Father's Day: Middle-class people feeling guilty about not allowing themselves to be commercially exploited.

PETER NORMAN

Institute of Directors: The Tory Party at lunch.
House of Lords: A playgroup with laws instead of lego.

JOHN GARRETT

Labour Party Conference: Fat men with regional accents quoting Aneurin Bevan.
Tory Party Conference: Slim men with Oxbridge accents quoting Benjamin Disraeli.

NICK RENNISON

Last Night of the Proms: Hooliganism tolerated because the participants wave Union Jacks.

JIM ANTHONY

'Blue Peter': A TV programme for children hosted by animals.

MICHAEL ROSEN

Election Day: A chance for sheep to choose their butcher.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Easter Sunday: Children vomiting before, during and after breakfast.

DAVID TOLEY

Remembrance Day: A one-minute break in preparation for the next war.

V. ERNEST COX

The Royal Family: The opium of the asses.

NAOMI MARKS

Liberal Party: Menopausal Peter Pans.

RUFUS STONE

Henley Royal Regatta: Blazers, boaters, bloated bellies and boastful bluster about boating.

RICHARD CROSHER

House of Commons: State employment centre where moonlighters work at what they please, during the hours they choose, at a salary fixed by themselves.

Church of England: A sect generally opposed to divorce and remarriage, though founded in order to facilitate them.

BARBARA SMOKER

The SDP: The unelectable purveying the undetectable.

KIT CARPENTER

The Police: An organisation for giving truncheons to men whose skulls are too thick to be hurt by them.

FIONA PITT-KETHLEY

FIRST PERSON

Jeremy Lewis

Shades of grey

APART FROM NATURAL timidity and incompetence, one reason for my being a comparative latecomer to the intimacies of smouldering passion (by modern standards I was almost of pensionable age before I finally took the plunge) was a nagging dread that I would misread the signals pulsing towards me from the party in question, and cause us both enormous shame and embarrassment by making some fumbling amorous approach when nothing more stimulating than a cup of cocoa was called for. So fearful was I that when – as an undergraduate hitchhiker – I found myself sharing a prison cell with the object of my dreams, and certain suggestions were made shortly after our swarthy gaoler had turned the lock on us, I was seized with doubt and indecision and muttered thickly about Byzantine mosaics until opportunity, suitably affronted, had ceased to knock. Not surprisingly, I was in disgrace for the rest of our trip, though I was far too self-absorbed to understand why: years later, when I realised what chances I had missed (and how unpleasingly I'd behaved), I dreamed torrid dreams of calling at her Surrey home cunningly diguised as a brush salesman, hotly – if belatedly – declaring my passion once I'd revealed my true identity and established that hubby was trundling in a north-easterly direction aboard the 8.15.

Fired by a heady brew of idealism, innocence and ignorance, people of the age I was then are brusquely intolerant of the evasions, ambiguities and small deceptions of life as we gnarled veterans understand it to be. At the time I felt very strongly that the problems of sex and animal magnetism would have been altogether more satisfactorily resolved if our Maker had provided us with a system of flashing lights – not dissimilar to traffic lights, perhaps, though without the ambivalent orange; and I brought the same craving for the explicit, the absolute and the unambiguous to every topic I deigned to light upon, from the state of the nation to the kind of life – austere, creative, crammed with self-realisation – one ought to lead. How nobly, and how priggishly, we abominated the hypocrisies and the compromises of our elders! In a world of black and white, there should be no room for grey! Truth, simple and definable as one of my flashing lights, must prevail, however dire its consequences!

Twenty years on, I cherish the inexplicit, tolerate (and embody) irresolution and ambivalence, sneakingly suspect that a dash of hypocrisy is essential to the smooth running of society, and strongly believe that truth, while sticking to the good work, should acquire a sense of time and place. Awkward customers who insist on calling a spade a spade and refuse to make the right noises for the wrong reasons, or for no reasons at all, may be invaluable as stimulants and purgatives; but life would be intolerable with too many of them about, and kindliness and cowardice ensure that, in our daily lives at least, a mealy-mouthed reticence continues to prevail. Besides, the gulf between what we say and what we do, so rich a stamping ground for the novelist, is as often comic and touching as it is repellent and malign.

Even so, we live in an age in which restraint is seen as a distortion or frustration of the spirit, and revelation – if not wisdom – will be attained through the fearless accumulation of information; in which religion is 'demystified' and brought down to earth (shattering it in the process), brick-shaped biographies record every second of a subject's life without suggesting their value to the rest of us, politicians' memoirs reveal the goings-on in high places to be even duller than anticipated, travellers' tales are brought to us by camera crews and over-excited commentators, and not a great deal is left for imagination and intimation to feed upon.

Nor does the cult of total honesty, and our mortal fear of hypocrisy, leave much room for manoeuvre as far as our private and marital lives are concerned. How often one hears, with a sinking heart, North London couples boasting of their unflinching frankness with one another, of how theirs is a truly 'adult' relationship in which neither side would stoop so low as to conceal any thought or deed from the other; and how often does the story end in tears, with (more often than not) the wife feeling bruised and resentful while the husband – having, as per contract, unburdened himself about the real reasons for his being late home from the office on three successive nights in a row, and expecting absolution to follow confession – lashes out in resentful panic at his wife and family like a spoiled and self-indulgent child. The rhetoric of honesty and truth – so fine in principle, but so dangerous in application, and so smoothly self-deceiving – justifies the infliction of frivolous and quite disproportionate unhappiness and suffering; marriages are tossed away and family lives convulsed from a mistaken sense of moral priorities.

Humankind, as we all know, cannot bear very much reality; there are times when a touch of Victorian hypocrisy would not come amiss. I have no intention of revisiting my Greek-travelling companion, with or without a false beard; but if I did, I'd make sure I kept it strictly to myself. □

NEW STATESMAN INDEX

The index to Vol. 104 (July-December 1982) is now available, price £1.50 post-free, from the publisher: 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

The index to Vol. 105 (January-June 1983) will be available soon.

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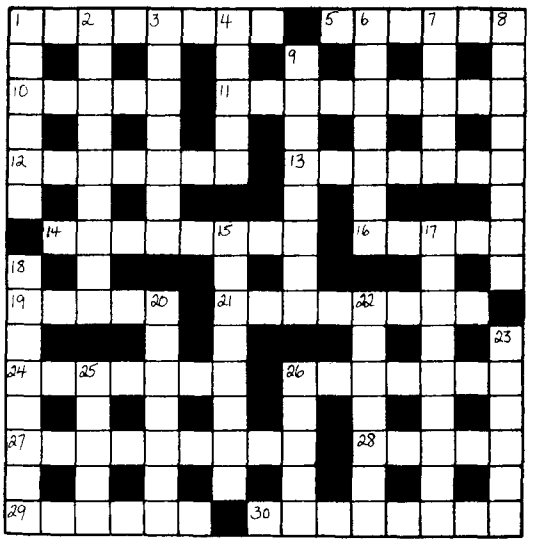
Weekend Crossword 1410

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1410, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 23 August.



Name_____

Address_____

_____

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ACROSS

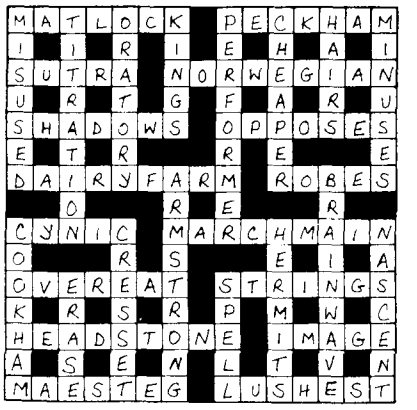
1 The fool is in the river, but she can supply remedial treatment (8)
5 Revolutionary consequences when atom is split (6)
10 Succeed in finding a superb translator? (5)
11 Collecting for a woman held in detention (9)
12 Frustrates the deviousness of eastern agents (7)
13 'The – and not the deed Confounds us' (*Macbeth*) (7)
14 Page included in back leaves when bound (8)
16 Appropriate place when it is hot in town (5)
19 Sorry but there is no river for the wader (5)
21 Wrongly grounded although he is inferior (8)
24 Dancer on tour? (7)
26 Caught and fleeced by the devious (7)
27 It has a mixed centre and is filled with delight (9)
28 Food for a journey to the orient (5)
29 Street lights are needed by those who are lost (6)
30 Once more take a back seat (8)

DOWN

1 *Getting together for a short paper about* a metal (6)
2 Amusement after a second becomes killing (9)
3 Choose artist for play (7)
4 Wise men reckon time in seconds (5)
6 *Language of salutation to Laurel* (7)
7 Place with topless towers (5)
8 In good time to win a girl (8)
9 Twisted and left helpless (8)
15 'No! I am not Prince Hamlet,' he said (8)
17 The handy way? (9)
18 Is frightened about the symbols of cowardice (8)
20 Gardening art which makes it pay or be changed (7)
22 Cock or duck in list (7)
23 Arrival of small volume during a depression (6)
25 Bury goes the whole season without a point (5)
26 Key personnel have to worry about a penny (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1409



Prizewinners to 1409

H. Pashley (Weston-Super-Mare)
C. J. Ralphs (Leeds)
Phil Sedler (London E1)

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Phone: 01-251 5487
Deadline for ads – Normally noon Tuesdays for publication on Fridays

Rates: **Lineage:** Private – 26p per word (min. 12 words £3.12).
Trade/Organisations – 29p per word (min. 12 words £3.48).
First two words automatically bold, further bold words 40p Trade or Private.
Box Number Service – U.K. £2.00 per insertion, overseas £4.00 per insertion.

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All private ads must be prepaid. We accept payment by ACCESS/VISA/AMERICAN EXPRESS, either by PHONE or POST.
Post ads to: Classified Dept., New Statesman, FREEPOST, London, EC1B 1EB (remember to allow for Freepost being equivalent to Second Class post)
To reply to a Box, write to: Box No. ....., New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU

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Superb, air-cond. beach hotel near Havana. Incl. friendship meetings on 'The Crisis in Central America' and 'The Cuban Revolution'. Ample time to relax, sailing, sightseeing etc. Other departures November/December.

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Spark Communications, 17 Helix Gardens, London SW2 2JJ. Telephone: 01-671 3598

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Hotel at Durres Beach supplies full board and a fine series of excursions to TIRANA, BERAT, KRUJA, SKODER, ELBASAN

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20-29 August, 27 August-5 September, 3-12 September
24 September-7 October £180
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We stay here because Baedeker's Guide says Tignale gives the best views of the Lake.

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KORCULA-YUGOSLAV RIVIERA £160
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Sample the ripening **peaches, figs** and **grapes.** See the winemaking – visit **Marco Polo's house** in **Korcula.**

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Appointments

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX

The Association currently has the following vacancy:

ADVISORY OFFICER — WEST MIDLANDS (BASED IN BIRMINGHAM)

This post is responsible to the Area Officer for developing and promoting new CABx and projects – negotiating funds and grants; inspecting and registering CABx; and participating in the selection and training of CAB staff.

The recession in the West Midlands has placed immense pressure on CABx, and we need someone who will thrive on that challenge. Experience of advice work, working with local committees, experience of Local Authority structures, commitment to the ideals of the service, dynamism and initiative, and a degree or a similar qualification are what we are seeking. Possession of a driving licence essential.

Salary scale **£8,166-£10,218** per annum plus 5% non-pensionable supplement. Car provided. Luncheon Vouchers, generous leave, contributory pension scheme.

For job description and application form please *WRITE* on a postcard to:
Head of Personnel
NACAB
110 Drury Lane, London WC2B 5SW

CLOSING DATE: **31 AUGUST 1983**

All applicants considered on basis of suitability for posts regardless of sex, race, marital status or disability.

Citizens Advice Bureau

BANKING INSURANCE & FINANCE UNION

It has been decided to re-advertise the post of

NEGOTIATING OFFICER OF THE UNION

The duties will involve negotiations with employers (including pre-recognition work), and casework.

Appropriate trade union experience is necessary and previous applicants need not make a further application.

In the first instance the position is with the International Bank Section of the union, but the position will be reviewed after an initial two year period.

This permanent and pensionable position is based in Wimbledon. The commencing salary is **£12,053** per annum (inclusive of London Allowance). A motor car will be provided.

Application forms are available at Union Headquarters, and completed forms must be returned by **Friday, 9 September 1983, to: BIFU Headquarters, Sheffield House, 17 Hillside, Wimbledon, London SW19 4NJ. Tel: 01-946 9151**

FEMINIST OWNER DRIVERS wanted to join Labyris Cars full time. Labyris is the car service designed for women by women. For details contact: 01-609 6749.

OV SELECTION CATERS for the more mature person as well as graduates and 'A' level students with typing and office skills. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy.) Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London, SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

Financial

IMMEDIATE ADVANCES £100-£25,000. Written terms on request. Regional Trust Ltd, 31 Dover Street, London W1A 4RT. 01-491 2934.

SALARIED PERSONS Postal Loans Ltd. Loans from £50. 175 Regent Street, W1. For written quote apply: Tel. 01-734 1974.

Records

MONGOLIAN NOSE FLUTES? Not yet but we're trying. For all Third World 'Ethnic' Records, including Pan-Pipes, African Tribal, Gamelan, Gagaku, Indian Ragas. Free catalogues s.a.e. to: Triple Earth Records, (Dept MRS1), 4 Bedford Rd, London W4 1JJ.

Literary

YOUR BOOK PUBLISHED & Sold by a British Publisher. Details: New Horizon (NS), 25 Station Road, Bognor Regis, W. Sussex.

NEW STATESMAN CLASSIFIEDS

Here's a complete list of the classified headings available from next week:

Accommodation Vacant; Accommodation Wanted; Appeals; Appointments; Appts. Wanted; Awards; Bursaries; Cinema; Exhibitions; Fellowships; Financial; Holidays/Travel; Poetry; Property; Removals; Schools; Theatre; Tuition; Jobs Abroad; Concerts; Events; Opera; For Sale; Groups/Meetings; General Services; Books/Publications; Therapy; Records; **HEARTSEARCH.**

ANNOUNCING A NEW LOOK TO THE NEW STATESMAN CLASSIFIEDS

We've received many suggestions from readers and advertisers over the past year for improving our Classified columns. We agree it's time we had a change. So we've decided to introduce some of the more printable improvements from NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE, FRIDAY, 19th AUGUST.
Here's what we are going to do:

★★ The type we set linage ads in will be made **25% LARGER!** You'll now get more space for your money and be easier to read!

★★ We'll be charging linage ads by the **WORD** from now on. So it will be much easier to work out how much your ad will be. (Abbreviations will still count as full words. Minimum 12 words as always.)

★★ There'll be a NEW COLUMN called **HEARTSEARCH** to take all your Lonely Hearts, contact and friendship ads. We feel that this will be a more effective column for reaching your ideal person. **(The Personal column will no longer appear as such!)**

★★ In order to establish the **HEARTSEARCH** column we're making the following astounding offer to readers. **FOR JUST £4 YOU CAN HAVE UP TO 24 WORDS *AND* A BOX NUMBER!**
That's **£1.20 CHEAPER** than our previous charge for **12** words and Box Number! (Extra words will cost you only 26p each.) **HEARTSEARCH** column only.

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CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY, Wednesday 17 August, 7.30 p.m. Room Seven, Mary Ward House, 5 Tavistock Place, London WC1. Larry Whitty, Research Officer of NUGMW, on 'Rebuilding the Labour Party'. All welcome.

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MIRACLE WANTED: attractive, elderly male graduate, seeks young companion. Have car, cottage. Box 6358.

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WARM, FRIENDLY male, 27, seeks caring female for correspondence and friendship. My interests include music, literature, politics. Yours could be anything. Brighten my life up and write. All replies answered. Box 6336.

WIDOW, 47, Manchester, seeks gentleman for dining out, concerts, holidays. Box 6335.

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LISTINGS

FRI 12 AUGUST

LONDON No Intervention in Central America. Vigil outside US Embassy in Grosvenor Square every day 9am to 7.30pm until 11 September. **Details 01-226 6747 extn 52.**

SAT 13 AUGUST

SHEFFIELD Labour Women's History – Labour Heritage Research Committee into Women's Affairs meeting 2.15pm Transport House, Sheffield. Talk on Women's Labour League. **Details Christine Collette 0793 750863.**

IRISH FREEDOM MOVEMENT NATIONAL DAY OF PROTEST – street meetings, street theatre. **Details: BM RCP London WC1. 01-274 3951.**
LONDON Hammersmith, Camden Town, Kilburn Sq., Brixton Underground stns 11am.
BIRMINGHAM Chamberlain Square, City Centre, 11am.
COVENTRY GPO, Hertford St. City Centre 12 noon.
LEEDS Dortmund Sq. City Centre 11am.
SHEFFIELD Peace Gardens, Town Hall 11am.
MANCHESTER Old Town Hall steps, Ashton Mkt 11.30am.

LONDON Benefit for **Emergency**, a new radical magazine out in September. 8pm, Caxton House, St Johns Way, N19 (Archway tube). Jazira and Sweet Distortion (Hackney's answer to Musical Youth), King Biscuit Disco, Keith Jefferson (funk poet). £2.50/£1.50 unwaged.

WED 17 AUGUST

LONDON Development in the Zimbabwean Economy. Dr Roger Ridell, Chief Economist, Zimbabwean Federation of Industries. 6.30pm, Africa Centre, 38 King St, WC2. **Org Britain Zimbabwe Society, 01-240 2844.**

THURS 18 AUGUST

CARDIFF The Mabinogi. Fair and theatrical spectacular, based on cycle of ancient Welsh legends, in Cardiff Castle. Fair begins at 7pm, performance at 8pm, daily until 29th. **Details Susan Kaplan 0222-498885 or 496040.**

SAT 20 AUGUST

Leicester Disarming Arguments – a day workshop on improving techniques of debate and discourse against the bomb, 9.30-5.30pm Students' Union Building, University of Leicester. Adm £1.50p unwaged. **Details Leicester CND, 35 Friar Lane, Leicester 0533-57228.**

FORTHCOMING

24 AUGUST London Grenada – in no one's back yard. Public meeting 7.45pm. **Org Central Ealing branch Communist Party, Labour Hall, Dorset Road, S Ealing, W5.**

27 AUGUST Porton Down. Picnic celebration of Life. **Contact Porton Down Action Group, Box 100, c o 143 Charing Cross Road, London WC2 01-734 2691.**

2 SEPT Edinburgh Peace – is it a feminist issue? Mixed workshop at Edinburgh Book Festival, 3-5pm, Marquee on Charlotte Sq Gdns, 50p. The opportunity for men and women to hear the issues surrounding women-only peace groups and discuss the implications. Also Violence, Non-violence and Feminism. Women only workshop 7-10pm, Crosswinds, 2 Earl Grey St. Discussion of whether peace can or should be achieved by violent means and what connection there is between violence against women and violence against other countries. **Contact Cass McGrogan 031-556 5329.**

3 SEPT Oxford Operation Major: one day conference to discuss the ruthless police/DHSS swoop on homeless and unemployed in Oxford in Sept 1982 and subsequent events. Fee £1.50, less for unwaged. **Org Oxford Claimants Defence Committee. Contact CDC, 44b Princes St, Oxford 0865-723750.**

3-10 SEPT London Festival for Peace and Freedom in Latin America. Sat 3rd Purcell Room 2.30-5pm Daniel Viglietti and others. Royal Festival Hall 7.30pm Inti Illimani, John Williams. Box Office 01-928 3191. Sun 4th Cuban Ballet, London Contemporary Dance, Holly Near, Bloomsbury Theatre 7.30pm. Tickets £4. Box Office 01-387 9629. 5th-9th National Film Theatre, 10 separate screenings of progressive Latin American films incl *Battle of Chile*. Box Office 01-928 3232. Fri 9th Caribbean Night at ULU, Malet St, 7pm. Calypso, poems, Reggae. Tickets £2.50. 01-272 4298. Sat 10th. All-Day Festival films, theatre, video, mime, painting, singers from El Salvador and Nicaragua. lots for children. £2/£1 unwaged at Imperial College. **Details CSC 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7 01-272 4298.**

4 SEPT London Holly Near performs for Chile at Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket. (7th Sept Town Hall, Leeds, 8th Sept Guild Hall, Cambridge.) **Details Bill McClellan 01-272 4298.**

9-11 SEPT Manchester Who needs? Who cares? Conference at Manchester University to examine increasing needs and decreasing resources in community care and unemployment. Spkrs incl David Blunkett, Michael Meadowcroft MP, Elizabeth Peacock MP, Dr Judith Grey. Cost £49. **Org Councils for Voluntary Service (National Association). Details Janet Harrison, 26 Bedford Sq, London WC1 01-636 4066.**

9-11 SEPT Brighton CND Skill Sharing Week and workshop, Lansdowne Centre Creche, overnight accom available, £8/£5 unwaged. **Details: Delia Warnes, Basement Flat, 22 Gladstone Pl, Brighton 0273 672545.**

9-11 SEPT Oxford Weekend Workshop of Adlerian Soc. of Great Britain 'Life Tasks for 1984' at St Hilda's College. **Details: 11 Osborne House, 414 Wimbledon Park Rd, SW19 6PW 01-789 8086.**

11 SEPT Clerkenwell Green 1pm Demonstration by Chile Solidarity Campaign – part of Festival for Peace in Latin America. **Details CSC 01-272 4298.**

17-18 SEPT Glasgow Working Conference called by Polish Solidarity Committee to discuss Democratic forms of social organisation in Czechoslovakia 1968 and Poland 1980-81; The peace movements in Eastern Europe; 'Situation of women in Eastern Europe'; Developing solidarity with the people of Eastern Europe. **Details Gordon Morgan, 59 Durward Ave, Glasgow G41 041-549 8958.**

17-18 SEPT London Socialist Society Summer School. 'No Turning Back' at County Hall, SE1. Workshops on extra-parliamentary democracy – local and industrial resistance, the future of the Left and socialist internationalism. **Details 9 Poland St W1 01-734 8501.**

18 SEPT London 'Leg it against the bomb' 10 mile sponsored slog for CND around Hyde Park from 11am at Holland Park, 4pm-5pm decorated legs comp. Find sponsors. **Forms available from CND, 11 Goodwin St, N4 3HQ Carol Freeman 01-263 0977.**

22 SEPT London. 'Sexuality and Self-Identity in Feminist Politics: Past and Present' first of 24-week course 6.30pm at 42 Queen Square, WC1. Tutors: Sally Alexander and Barbara Taylor. **Details 01-828 3735.**

23-25 SEPT Bristol. 'Politics and the Locality' Wkend Conf. **Org Dept of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Bristol in assoc with The Politics Assoc.**

23-25 SEPT Keele '14-18: The New Vocationalism in School and Further Education'. ATSS Annual Conf at The University of Keele, Staffs. **Details: D. Glasson 0782 621111 Extn 299. Org Assoc for the Teaching of Social Science.**

24 SEPT Leicester 'Childbirth Today' Michel Odent – pioneer of active birth in France. 10-12.30pm £5. **Org Leicester Active Birth Conf, 9 Cross Green, Rothley, Leicester. 0533 374285. ALSO 3pm at Ivanhoe College, Ashby.**

29 OCT Oxford 'Artful Theology: a Feminist Recreation of Christian Tradition' at Old Fire Station, George St. Women Only. 10am onwards. Spkrs incl Sara Maitland, Julia Brosnan, Anne Parsons. Dscn. Exhibition, Events, Bkstall, Creche on demand. Wheelchair access and toilets. Disabled sisters please contact in advance. £3/£2 unwaged. **Details: Anne Parsons, 29 Hurst St, Oxford OX4 1HA Patricia Duncker 0865 727426.**

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